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COMMENT

Editorial Statement:

This statement is intended to inform our readers of a change in the editorial composition of *Modern Review*. When the magazine was founded a year ago, its prospectus aimed at the creation of a monthly that would combine the idea of a free forum for all democratic viewpoints of the socialist, liberal and labor persuasion—with a political character of its own to be expressed in editorial comment as well as in the general orientation of the magazine. The three editors, as well as the editorial board, accepted this general principle; a divergence of opinion developed, however, in the editorial application of these agreed principles. The editors were inclined to shape the magazine more clearly as an open forum, while the board expressed itself in favor of a publication with free discussion—but with a distinctive character of its own, expressing the views of the editorial board. This difference of interpretation, as expressed in day-by-day editorial judgment, made harmonious cooperation difficult—and finally impossible. Due to the additional time necessitated by the editorial reorganization, this issue of *Modern Review* is dated, March-April. All subscriptions will, of course, be extended one issue.

Exit Czechoslovakia

Still another country must now be added to the long list of states that have been made victims of Soviet aggression. There is no longer an independent Czechoslovak state; it has been transformed into a Soviet satellite like Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, North Korea, Eastern Germany, East Austria.

The fate of the Czech people is tragic, indeed. Having achieved independence as a state in 1918, after centuries of Hapsburg rule, Czechoslovakia existed only for two decades as a truly free and sovereign nation. In 1938, betrayed by her Western allies, it became a province of Hitler's empire; liberated from their domination in 1945, it immediately was entered into the "sphere of influence" of her giant

eastern ally and—in the last days of February 1948—almost on the tenth anniversary of Hitler's conquest—this nation was swallowed by its greatly beloved "Slav sister."

What has happened now in "golden Prague" has been the almost automatic development of a situation which arose in the course of the Second World War. One need not have possessed prophetic intuition to have been able to foretell with precision what has transpired since the end of the war. One had only to understand correctly the "correlation of forces" that had developed, and to abandon illusions regarding the plans and intentions of Soviet foreign and domestic policy.

The first twenty months after the end of the war, Soviet diplomacy and propaganda were directed toward the actual alteration of the agreement on the division of the spheres of influence in Europe and Asia. Stalin attempted "by hook or crook" to enclose in his sphere of influence, Greece, Trieste, France, Italy, Iran, Turkey, and Italy's African colonies. He acted through local Communists and fellow-travelers, a "democratic" revolution in Greece, the igniting and kindling of nationalist fanaticisms in Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Iranian Azerbeijan, Soviet Armenia, among the Kurds of the Near East. He kept his troops in Iran, in flagrant violation of solemn agreements; he incited Tito to confront the United States with the "accomplished fact" of the forcible seizure of "internationalized" Trieste. He supplied Albania with mines to blow up British warships off the shores of Greece; he sent ultimata to Turkey; he moved heaven and earth and utilized Vishinski the "father of lies" in order to enlarge to the utmost the Soviet sphere of influence, and to probe the possible degrees of resistance of the Western powers and to test the stability of their "sphere." This "resistance," which was almost non-existant at the outset, began, however, to grow stronger and stronger under the pressure of increasing Communist aggressiveness. The contours of the spheres, flexible and unstable in the beginning, were obviously becoming more and more rigid. By last spring, Moscow realized that it could no longer hope for further expansion without the risk of serious and dangerous complications. At that time the most important task of Soviet policy became not additional expansion but the internal strengthening and consolidation of the already acquired sphere.

The period of Soviet pseudo "liberalism," when Moscow tolerated within its sphere of influence half-independent governments and half-

democratic regimes, was over. The NKVD and the Cominform did not waste time, and when consolidation instead of expansion became the order of the day, the Stalinist implementing agencies were well prepared. The police forces were securely in the control of Communist ministers of the interior. "National" armies were controlled by pro-Soviet commanders. All media and weapons of mass propaganda and information were in the hands of local Communist parties. Trade unions likewise were under the domination of the Communists and their stooges. The Socialist parties were undermined from within by Communist agents and fellow-travelers, and even in bourgeois parties, which officially were anti-Communist, the Communists had succeeded, by means of bribery, terror and blackmail, in establishing their influence.

Moscow had only to "press a button" in order to set in motion the mechanisms of the *coup d'état* prepared by specialists in the field, and to achieve the desired results. It is true that occasionally developments did not materialize quite according to schedule. The indignation, for example, within the ranks of the Czech Social-Democratic party almost spoiled everything; the pro-Soviet leader of the Social Democrats, Fierlinger, was removed from his post by the party. As we now know, the Social Democratic party was an integral facor in Gottwald's strategy. Still another "accident" happened in Czechoslovakia: in the Ministry of Justice, a non-Communist discovered a Communist plot against the life of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jan Masaryk, and that of another non-Communist minister. It was only by change that the carefully prepared plot failed in execution. No one in Czechoslovakia doubted that the head of the government, Gottwald, had been informed about the Olomouc conspiracy. But neither the removal of Fierlinger nor the scandalous revelations about the conspiracy prevented the Czech Communists, acting under the supervision of Molotov's aide, Zorin, who had specially come from Moscow, from carrying out their Moscow-sponsored plan. The "correlation of forces" was such that any plan put forth by Moscow was bound to succeed. Squeezed by the Soviet fist, Benes was forced to capitulate as Hacha was forced to surrender in 1938 to the Hitler ultimatum. The Czechs are too realistic a people to run the risk of pre-doomed resistance. Only a few hundred students from Prague University went into the streets protesting against the seizure of power by the Communists. The rest of the population was "silent."

There is no longer a Czechoslovakia. There is a Czech province

of the USSR, whether or not this annexation has been officially proclaimed at a solemn session of the Supreme Soviet.

There is no longer a Czechoslovakia. The hour of her rebirth and restoration will come, but it will not come a moment earlier than the triumph of freedom in Moscow.

ADA: Opportunity for a Liberal-Labor Regrouping

That there has been no effective integration in the American political arena to date between liberal and labor forces seems almost beyond question. Liberals have forlornly persisted in their declarations of liberal-labor unity, but for the most part rhetoric has substituted for more solid organizational and ideological links. The trade union view, in the main, has evidenced not only suspicion of "intellectualism"—sometimes the informal synonym for liberal—and relegated "intellectuals" to subordinate positions in the trade union movement when place was found for them at all, but there has existed the more serious labor belief, whether unconsciously held or explicitly stated, that the interests of both groups were of necessity divergent. Despite occasional political flurries on the part of labor—usually in *protest* against some measure rather than in sponsorship of positive causes—trade unions for the most part have restrained themselves to continuously increased "bread and butter" gains. These accomplishments are, of course, not only important but vital, and the general subject of increased standards of living quite logically and appropriately forms one of the central foci of the labor drive. But it requires no great political sophistication at this late date to realize that economic gains are circumscribed by political conditions, by the state of the American political structure in short range terms, as well as in the long-range perspective. In this context, it is apparent that even the most restricted "bread and butter" issue is deeply embedded in a social matrix, and that the means of general accomplishment, as well as future extension and protection, lie in the political realm.

The Achilles-heel of the liberals, on the other hand, has too often been their failure to grasp the fact that without a political *Weltanschauung,* without an adequate program for societal reconstruction, and without the economic backbone that the support of organized labor provides, the status of liberalism in America will remain that of organized

institutions of lamentation and protestations of purity—devoted in the main to challenging the undesired event after its occurrence without the political strength to prevent its occurrence, and certainly without the ability to have constructive measures of social decency instituted. Part of the success of the Communist Party, in this context—in corraling the support of individual groups which they infiltrated—can of course be traced to their incisive grasp o fpolitical techniques. Anti-Communist liberals in too many cases repulsed emotionally, and properly, by unsavory Communist tactics, have retreated to positions of genteel and impotent abandonment of politics. One fact that cannot be too frequently stated is that the problem, correctly formulated, has never been that of politics vs. no politics, but democratic politics vs. anti-democratic politics. vs. no politics, but democratic politics vs. anti-democratic politics. Morality and martyrdom by themselves unfortunately do not furnish adequately vigorous weapons. Political structures must be built that are capable of implementing affirmative programs to replace existing social institutions that are immoral, insufficient or in need of extension.

In this perspective, the recent convention of the Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) is cause for considerable encouragement. This reaction would be appropriate if one were merely to note the enlightened political attitudes that prevailed at the convention, the general representation—including a large body of student delegates—the program planks adopted. But there is a much more palpable factor, and that is what may well be a portent of developing possibilities for a solid labor-liberal merging. This glimpse is based on more than the fact that the AFL was represented by William Green and the CIO by Walter Reuther—although the active participation of both of these important labor leaders and others such as the AFL's independent David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, is not without its encouragement. But most important is the realization that labor has reached a vantage point from which the social and political future is too readily discernible unless a broad unity of pro-democratic liberal and labor forces is effected.

The ease with which a Republican Congress—with a good deal of Democratic complicity—wrote finis to the era of the Wagner Act, and the unhealthy vision of possible additional shackling measures to come, provides part of the unpalatable vision of the future. The general cynicism and amoralism of the two major political parties in this crucial period, the general lack of a comprehensive program to deal with

post-war economic problems, the threat of a coming depression, all these are strands in the general deep-rooted social unrest that prevails at the present time. The CIO has gone on record as opposed sharply to the Communist faction in the trade union movement; it can implement this opposition by strongly supporting anti-Communist liberal forces, and by encouraging these groups to develop positive programs to eradicate the social injustices upon which the totalitarians of the Right and Left thrive. The AFL has announced formation of a political campaign to replace anti-labor legislators. It would be well if they too saw the wisdom of extending that campaign and backing new envigorated liberal groupings with that aim included in a more comprehensive program.

The major problem that exists for ADA and its partisans, outside of the not inconsiderable problem of recruiting mass strength, is that of devision of this kind of comprehensive social and political program, a program qualitatively different from the wobbly and evasive cure-all pre-election "programs" of the two major parties. In large part, it is upon the cogency and vigor of this kind of a program that their future strength will depend. The ADA convention has made an encouraging start. The task that now faces liberals is that of making the bonds between labor and liberal forces increasingly stronger and more permanent, and the false dichotomy of interests between liberals and labor must be thoroughly broken.

CONQUEST VERSUS USE OF POWER

Leon Blum

It is by indicating the distinction between the terms "use of power" and "conquest of power" that I shall define the use of power. I have been concerned with this problem since I introduced this formulation into the French Socialist Party about twenty-five years ago.

Use, or if you will, exercise of power, occurs before the Socialist revolution. The term applies when a Socialist party, in the normal processes of democratic institutions, finds itself the source of legal power. The Socialist party then utilizes this legal power in accordance with existing institutions, and within the framework of the present social order, that is, within the capitalist framework.

The conquest of power is completely different: it is not an act which occurs before the revolutionary phase, it is a revolutionary act. The very expression, revolutionary conquest of power, led us, in the wake of the First World War, of the Russian Revolution and the Third International, to elucidate and make explicit its meaning so that we could distinguish between traditional Socialism and Communism.

The conquest of political power by the working class is a revolutionary act in that we believe it to be the preliminary and indispensible condition for the revolutionary transformation of the social structure. However, though revolutionary conquest of power is the necessary and fundamental condition for social transformation, it is not enough. The revolutionary conquest of power which conditions the social transformation, that is, the revolution, is not by itself the revolution. It is only the revolution to the degree to which it permits the revolutionary transformation which can only be accomplished by it. If, for example, the working class in a given country has complete political control, whether or not by force, if it is complete master of State power but if, however, this control does not allow it, whether for economic or other reasons to complete the revolutionary transformation, then the revolution will not have been accomplished and the revolutionary conquest of power will not have occurred.

"Social revolution" is an idea which I have often attempted to

clarify by comparing social revolutions with political revolutions. We have had so many examples of political revolutions in France since the end of the 18th century and during the first two-thirds of the 19th, that explanation is simple. In the French political revolutions of this period, popular and proletarian action generally played a preponderent role. This is as true for 1792 as for July 1830. But literature and iconography have added to the confusion. The revolution for power is a proletarian insurrection which destroys a world and builds a new one. There is a tremendous difference between the political revolutions which France has known and the social revolutions which are still unknown to us. The essential difference is that the political revolution is completed when power has changed hands. This substitution of one class for another, one group for another, is not only the fundamental condition for the revolution but it is the revolution itself—it is the beginning and the end. However, in a social revolution, the taking of power is only the beginning.

The social revolution begun by the revolutionary conquest of power is not limited to a purely political revolution. What distinguishes a social revolution? A social revolution exists when the conquest of power is succeeded by a social transformation. And what is a social transformation? It is, of course, the destruction of the juridical structure of property and the substitution of something else. This is the revolutionary mutation *par excellence*. We live within the structure of capitalist property and only its destruction will achieve revolution. But I believe that it is necessary for one to go further and say that social transformation does not only call for the destruction of the juridical basis of property, but also for the destruction of all kinds of social, moral and cultural patterns as well as the entire network of international relations created by capitalism. In historical terms, it is evident that destroying a cause does not at the same time destroy its effects. The life of societies has been characterized by effects which outlive their causes for a long time. Social transformation can only be said to have taken place when capitalist society and all the vestiges of previous societies which still cling to our present society have disappeared.

Let us imagine a country in which only the first phase has been accomplished, that is, capitalist private property has been destroyed without altering all of its ramifications. This is, I believe, the present status of Soviet Russia, where capitalist property has been destroyed but where social transformation has not been completely accomplished in

that the subsidiary effects of capitalism still exist. In countries where this is true, one is confronted with problems which resemble more those of the use of power than those of the conquest of power. This explains why, in the USSR, certain problems are analoguous to those in capitalist states in which property has remained private. This has been extended to the international sphere: Soviet policy is based on the promotion of certain national interests as it was before the transformation. To the extent to which private property has been abolished, but the existence of the wage-earner remains, the basic social relations—those which are established between those who work and the masters of work—still exist in fact and pose the same problems as in a capitalist society.

This is, of course, an extreme case. I know of only one country in which there has been revolutionary conquest of power and such destruction of the property basis of capitalism. The more typical case embodies the use of power in a country which still retains the juridical structure of capitalist property, a situation which is not essentially transformed by nationalizations. Nationalizations are very important but they do not modify the juridical basis of property, since the State indemnifies the private enterprises which it transforms and, above all, since the substitution of the State as employer does not modify in substance the social position of the wage-earner. This is the situation faced by most of Europe. There are those countries in which the capitalist framework has remained intact with a homogeneous Socialist government as in Great Britain, or with Socialist participation in varying degrees. Similar difficulties face all these various governments. I cannot say that this surprises me; for twelve years, from 1924 to 1936, I, and my comrade Vincent Auriol, devoted ourselves principally to preventing the Socialist parties from taking power. We did so for many reasons, the most important of which was that we recognized the danger of confusion between the conquest of power and the use of power.

We said that if we participate in government, that will be the *use* of power, but will the workers appreciate this distinction? When they see Socialists in the government, won't they believe that there has been a revolutionary *conquest* of power and won't this provoke impatience followed by disillusionment? Won't it create mental uneasiness and won't they believe that our Party will become like all the others? I have reiterated this assertion for twelve years and my feeling is unchanged. I have never believed that the use of power, or participation

in power, is a necessary or normal situation for a Socialist party. I believe that even if circumstances frequently force us to power, it still remains the exception, not the rule. These are at the base of all of the difficulties of a Socialist government and must be solved one by one. Moreover, these difficulties renew and reproduce themselves constantly.

In 1924, I was in contact with Ramsey MacDonald when he formed the first Left government in England under paradoxical conditions. The Labour Party had less than half the seats in the House of Commons. The opposition was composed of a coalition consisting of the Conservatives and those Liberals who followed Lloyd George. MacDonald took advantage of the barely benevolent neutrality of the small group of Liberals who hadn't entered the National Union coalition. I asked him why he consented to take over the government under such conditions when he knew such a government wouldn't be feasible. He answered that he considered it necessary, regardless of the conditions of government, to break the aristocratic prejudice of government. When I asked him what he meant, he answered that the mass of English people, including the workers, believed that only one social class was capable of governing Great Britain. He therefore took power in order prove that it would be no mortal sin, and that the earth would continue to turn, even if power were taken from the ruling class accustomed to it.

I then told him that our problem was exactly the reverse of his. It would be incumbent upon us to show that everything would change when we were in power. I have since told this anecdote to English friends and have realized that we both were right and wrong. The crux is to show that you represent, simultaneously, continuity and change. We must convey the impression, the feeling that the collective interests of the country are as well placed in the hands of a Socialist party as they are in those of any other party. At the same time we must impart to the country as a whole and more particularly to the working class, the feeling of something special, the feeling that we shall do things differently from any other party. We must give the impression that we shall undertake policies that only we may risk doing. A Socialist government must act quite differently. This is, of course, very difficult and is limited by the realities we must reconcile. We have taken power within the capitalist framework and we are honor-bound to exercise it loyally, not only for moral reasons but also because it is in the interest of our Party, and of the working masses that we represent. The Communists have always told us, that if they became the trustees of capi-

talist society in the normal processes of democratic law, they would act so as to best protect the common welfare. We could imagine more subtle formulation: such as taking power in order to achieve positions that would permit the easier destruction of capitalism; but I do not wish to assign to anyone motives other than those openly declared. We must direct the society entrusted to us honestly and loyally; it is our duty as the holders of power. Since we are Socialists, whatever action we take tends toward social transformation and therefore toward improvement which inevitably leads today's capitalist society towards tomorrow's social order.

On the other hand, because we are the trustees of capitalist society we are faced with very delicate problems which we, as Socialists, know have no satisfactory solution. I have often repeated what I feel to be the most convincing proof of the truth of Socialist doctrine; which is, that under the present social order we find ourselves faced by insoluble problems. Thus *pro* and *con* become equally justified. If, however, we imagine the same problem in a Socialist society, our problem is resolved of itself; it disappears, having lost its reason for being.

You can test this with such problems as that of free exchange and see how it is applied in a certain number of governments. When you examine the relationship between salaries and prices, each of the opposing viewpoints seems unanswerable when considered apart from the economic whole and you conclude that there is no satisfactory conclusion. But if we had an ordered universe, what would such problems as protective tariff versus free trade mean, what conflict of interest would there be between producer and consumer? If, instead of living in our present society in which salary with its fluctuating rate is payment for the merchandise called work, one imagines a society in which all the workers are members of an immense association whose products are freely shared, how could there be conflict between the movement of salaries and that of prices?

All these difficulties, in any case, have the same causes and the same results, i.e., they stem from the use of power in individual capitalist states in which private property exists. The only way to avoid them would be to abandon proletarian political action or, in other words, to abandon one of the fundamentals of Marxism. One can oppose this idea as do some Socialist schools of thought: those of Saint-Simon, Proudhon, Bakunin, and all revolutionary syndicalist thought. Saint-Simon and his disciples do not at all recognize that the

conquest of political power by the working class or any other class is a preliminary to social transformation. They believe that this transformation can occur by a kind of intellectual, even religious crusade, as the documents before and after 1830 indicate with extraordinary strength of penetration. Proudhon does not ask the proletariat to take inspiration from political institutions since he predicts and preaches their eventual elimination. "Government of men will be replaced by the administration of things," says Proudhon. Revolutionary doctrine, according to Bakunin, lies in conspiratorial groups who will take power by terroristic means and who meet secretly for clandestine action.

The revolutionary syndicalists want the masses to join together within corporative organizations, and to take power through these organizations by such methods as the general strike. Therefore, there has been no true fusion between the ideas of political and social revolution. Marxism, on the contrary, has always opposed these revolutionary concepts, from Saint-Simon to the revolutionary syndicalists. Marxism has always called for the creation of such political parties as would attract the largest possible number, if not all of the workers. It has stipulated the conquest of political power as the essential preliminary for revolution. The Marxist School became clearer and more precise in this respect after democratic progress was crystallized in universal suffrage, and Bebel himself supported this Marxist concept most firmly. Marx wrote against Proudhon and fought against Bakunin. In fact it was on this issue that Marx forced Bakunin from the International and caused the split in the First International.

The ballot is a revolutionary weapon for Marxists. Political action must be fostered in all its forms, from the municipal to the national level. You can say: "I do not accept the theory of class political action for the proletariat," but as soon as you accept it, you cannot resist the chain of events. If you participate in action, you can adopt the tactic of complete abstention, as the Labor Party did at the beginning of its Parliamentary life. But this tactic is only possible when the Socialist group is in the minority. As soon as it becomes a majority, it is condemned to take power, whether difficult or not. It can only escape this role by repudiating the idea of class political action.

I have often thought of this problem and, in the midst of these problems of the use of power to which I was witness or at times closely connected, I have asked myself who was right—Proudhon, Bakunin or Marx? I believe that it was Marx. I believe that a proletarian party

which would have repudiated political action, growing silently and biding its time, would gradually lose its ability and taste for action. I believe there is a training for action which is necessary for the hygiene of proletarian parties. I believe that political action is necessary for the political education of the masses and necessary also for the governmental education of the elite. But my principal reason for opposing the viewpoints of Proudhon and Bakunin is that these viewpoints declare that the proletariat can develop by its own momentum, regardless of the society of which it is a part. This is fundamentally the opinion of Jaurès in 1904. I do not believe—after the First and certainly the Second World War, and after we have seen political regimes which called for the elimination of working class organizations—that anyone can say that he does not care what political climate he lives in. I believe that difficulties are inevitable, and that solving them by repudiating this Marxist idea would be a remedy worse than the original evil.

In most European countries the state has ceased to be a pure and simple expression of capitalism. If it had remained so, it is obvious that the use of power in the capitalist framework would be an indefensible and intolerable contradiction. You know as well as I that in Marxian dialectic the forces of production determine the juridical system of property, which in turn determines the whole ideological, moral and cultural superstructure. You also know that the problem of the decline of a given social system appears in the incompatability between the forces of production and the system developed from them. I shall add another Marxist symptom of social decay: the same incompatibility appearing between the juridical structure of property on the one hand, and the ideologies, beliefs and customs built upon this structure on the other. These observations have become more obvious, since the last war, than they have been at any time previously. It was capitalism which created the modern form of democracy, but the democracies are more and more dissociating themselves from the capitalism which gave them life. This means that the conditions for the Socialist use of power have changed. I am not one of those who say that the revolution has already been accomplished or begun in France. It has not begun since private property still retains the essential condition of unlimited transfer, and because the wage-earner relationship persists in all its strength. Though I do not believe that we are in the revolutionary phase, I do believe that revolutionary problems have appeared in the sense that the double contradiction has become increasingly obvious. It is clear that

capitalism is increasingly unable to control the forces of production which it created, and that it sees its political institutions separate themselves from it. The modern state is gradually developing away from capitalism and that is why it is possible for Socialist parties to rule it without enslaving it or themselves becoming slaves of capitalism. They take power by using it as a weapon in the fight against capitalism, that is, by using state authority to create favorable conditions for the achievement of Socialism.

All this is difficult and dangerous, all the more difficult and dangerous since it does not take place in the calm and deliberative atmosphere of a lecture hall. It takes place at white heat, if I may use the term, and under the impact of unforseeable events, of improvised reaction, under the fire of opponents' attacks, who, too, are not without their difficulties. Yes, it is difficult, but here we find the application of Jaurès' dictum: "Everything is difficult." It is difficult, but it is possible for the reasons I have indicated. It is possible if there exists an active unity within the workers' parties, if no split is allowed to sully its purity and absolute idealism, if there is complete and reciprocal confidence between the leaders and the rank and file. All this demands a careful selection of leaders and considerable evaluative ability and judgment on the part of the masses.

BUREAUCRACY AND FREEDOM

Alfred Weber

It is almost commonplace to observe that we live in an era of increasing bureaucratization of our existence. To discuss bureaucracy and freedom meaningfully is to inquire into the common conditions of social life that are conducive to such bureaucratization; to ask what specific forms it assumes and to what extent it is avoidable and escapable; how we can evade the obvious implicit danger of its degenerating into totalitarianism or even terrorism; in brief, how to preserve liberty.

Historically, bureaucracy is not a novel phenomenon. Indeed, the history of advanced human civilizations began with bureaucracies that upheld and gave shape to the entire social life of the time. The hieratically-organized priesthood that created and guarded the magically-sanctified way of life, under pharaohs and emperors in ancient Egypt and Babylon, was probably the most "totalitarian" bureaucracy history has ever known. In its all-prevading forms and formulae, it conditioned not only the outer but also the inner manifestations of life—which in their totality could not be tampered with if its magic forces were to be kept intact. But this apparatus required no special instrument of self-perpetuation—neither a strong police nor a standing army. Only some 1500 years later, about 2000 B.C., were such special institutions established in defense against the nomads pressing in from without. These first great totalitarian bureaucratic structures could afford not to stain themselves with instruments of compulsion; they never experienced freedom as their antagonist.

The primary civilizations of China and India were likewise permeated with a strong bureaucratic web, similarly established on a basis of magic acceptance. In India, it was at an early point replaced by the caste system developed by the carriers of this magic faith—the Brahmins—who utilized the primitive belief in the transmigration of the soul and infused a solid skeleton of hieratic, functional division of labor into the existential matrix. There was no longer any need for a distinct layer of professional officialdom. Little remained of individual freedom of action in either the practical or even the political sphere.

But considerable intellectual freedom could thrive, particularly under the influence of the surviving noble caste of the Kshatriya. In China, the mandarins came to form a strata of learned scribes, supported by the magistic hierocracy. An extraordinarily powerful bureaucracy emerged; its enemy, however, is not to be found in the masses yearning for freedom but always in the imperial seraglio with its eunuchs. Yet considerable leeway remained for freedom in practice. And, just as in India, a culture of great spontaneity, permeating all strata of society, could develop within this still relatively loose bureaucratic framework.

The ancient civilizations of the Middle East—above all, that of Persia—were also almost all built on a foundation of bureaucracy. But in the Persian Empire itself bureaucracy was not hieratically sanctified. Far-reaching tolerance and only loose cohesion among its components remained characteristic of the great empire. The Persian emperor did not become a semi-divinity or vicar of god equipped with a supporting and all-encompassing bureaucracy. The distinct ways of life among the conquered nationalities were left virtually untouched or even revived, as was best exemplified by the liberation of the Jewish aristocracy from Babylonic exile and the re-establishment of Jerusalem.

But neither this Jewish nor any other "unbureaucratized" state or social organism had any conscious notions of personal freedom. Among the Jews in particular, all inner and outer activity was far too ritualized and placed under the control, first of the Levites, later of the learned scribes. Spiritual effort was harnessed not for the achievement of personal freedom but for the collective fulfillment of the religious mission and its ethically-conceived unfolding and deepening. The struggle was not being waged for freedom as such.

The ancient Jewish community was one of the first highly-developed state edifices without a proper bureaucracy. But owing to the peculiar manner in which individualism and collectivism were here intertwined, it stood entirely outside the contest of freedom versus bureaucracy.

The first societies that were aware of this contest and whose consciousness of freedom grew and sharpened upon this awareness, were ancient Greece and Rome. Neither of them needed bureaucracy since both had found a suitable form of social organization in the *polis* and *urbs,* with their honorary offices, and required no rational division of functions or professional specialization in public life. With lesser success in Greece and with greater success in Rome, this social organiza-

tion met the test. The priestly hierocracy remained almost unseen—mysticism, sacrifices, and oracles notwithstanding—since it found no means for its propagation into the workaday life in the form of a temporal bureaucracy. It remained impotent, deprived of the opportunity to limit the range of free decisions in any manner.

The concept of freedom, taken for granted ever since the days of the earlier horsemen, continued to be recognized in the continual social struggle which accompanied the transformations that both the Roman and the Greek state underwent on the thoroughly rational basis of liberty. It was this notion of freedom that became the articulate intellectual slogan voiced in the great fight against the bureaucratic east, a fight waged not only for the preservation of national independence but quite specifically directed against a world of "unfreedom." Herodotus was aware of this, and this Thucydides put into Pericles' mouth in his funeral oration: ". . . freely we order the commonwealth" and "not fetched by imitation of others, we are rather a model for them."

Leaving aside the worlds of Islam and Russia, which are too complex to be treated briefly, let us look at the Western world. While one does encounter strongly bureaucratic forms of organization in that part of the West which was once occupied by the Roman Empire, the West, both at its inception and for a considerable time thereafter, was as good as devoid of officialdom. For feudalism was the very opposite of bureaucracy, since it represented the non-professional and non-specialized execution of functions. And this is why within and alongside the form of reciprocal feudal relationships—contractual, hence originally based on the premise of freedom—with the revival of classicism, the ancient consciousness of liberty could be revived and renewed. It could produce a symbiosis of the precultural sense of freedom, on the one hand, and a more deeply comprehensible and comprehended freedom produced by Christianity, on the other. In bending the old concept of natural rights to its ends, it could unfold the ideas of liberty and equality of a Locke.

Such was the great contest of bureaucracy and freedom in the past. The rise of the modern state was the occasion, and provided the framework for that strata of professional officialdom that was imported into the West from Byzantium over the Italian universities. This is also whence came its metaphysical sanction.

Less attention is usually paid to the fact that the bureaucratic stratification in the modern state has been produced as much by the

emergence of standing armies as by the rise of civil officialdom. It is no accident that the modern standing army, with its rational gradations and schematic unification, has found its most striking expression in the military *casern*—admittedly, a factory with a bureaucratic head.

Since the latter half of the nineteenth century, the bureaucratic stranglehold has rapidly spread, as if endowed with mystic power, from administrative offices and army barracks into almost all fields of human endeavor. It has increasingly penetrated, affected, and transformed relations between man and man. Today industry is in large segments no less bureaucratic than are the public health services, in whose barrack-like hospitals the disease, and not the sick human being, assumes individuality—where, so to speak, the object replaces the subject. The same is true of modern social legislation, of the compulsory insurance schemes with their gigantic machines; of such labor organizations as trade unions, with their bureaucratic heads; of popular political organizations, with their caucuses. Not only the state and other official bureaucracies continue to swell in accordance with the "law of growing state functions" first formulated by Adolf Wegner; next to them we witness a growth—a rank growth—of innumerable private bureaucracies, which everywhere offer the same picture: the emergence of a closed bureaucratic leadership, largely autocratic in practice, and as specialized a division of labor as is rationally necessary or possible. In recent decades, the number of officials and civil servants has been growing far more rapidly than the number of workers. What we witness is a tremendous inflation of the bureaucratic head topping a more slowly growing body. And this, despite all democratic sugar-coating, means: the spread of authoritarian leadership through small cliques and staffs, tending not only rationally to divide the fulfillment of functions horizontally, if you will, but also to permeate it vertically in such a manner as to assure the uppermost bureaucratic nucleus, due to its organizational-technical position, of preponderance against any endeavor to shape and express the will from below. This is the hidden master key to the over-all trends of present-day social organization.

If we ask for the way out, for an antitoxin, we must first take account of the following. Our modern world, interdependent as it has become, organized in large and increasingly inclusive units, necessarily bringing a specialization of functions in society, cannot be controlled except by large-scale formations, inherently gradated and bureaucratic in management. This is certainly true of the general organization of

services and supplies. Just like the Egyptians and Babylonians of old, with their canal system which had to be bureaucratically managed, so we "moderns" are caught in the gigantic web of railroads, postal services, electricity, and what not—a web which spans and upholds our very existence, a web within whose framework we live and die, and which by its very nature commands central bureaucratic direction and rational subdivision. On our level of civilization, this framework of social existence has become an artificially rational and bureaucratic stockade from which there is no escape.

Just as inescapably, the great dimensions of our world and the concomitant huge organizations that belong in it result in the transformation of a previously diversified society of individuals into a uniform mass. This is also inherent in the very nature of these vast dimensions, since they bracket and uniformly affect great masses of human beings in a standardized fashion. It is an optical illusion to see this trend toward mass uniformity only in its most obvious and almost accidental manifestation, namely, the uprooted, intermingled and compressed masses of our cities and industrial centers. Less visibly but just as effectively, this schematizing trend affects that part of the population which has remained geographically dispersed but is being supplied —day after day, hour after hour—with the same uniformly-prepared set of experiences and information—and this in such a manner that the victims are being flattened out, as if by a steamroller, without being capable of resisting this process. Today they cannot but react as a mass, which is being swayed daily and hourly in similar rhythm. Not to face this reality is to indulge in romantic self-deception.

But once we recognize how a limited number of central agencies can make and break public opinion and decisively shape the mental habitat of the masses, we understand how natural it is to try and utilize these psychic potentialities through appropriate organs and methods specifically patterned for this purpose. One more step, and an effort is made to recast this outwardly uniform mass into one that is a herd in inherent constitution and behavior—and thus gain complete control over it. The resulting political conception is the specific modern authoritarian party, with its various appendages such as the rational system of "party cells" and control by "block wardens." Intensive propaganda turns into terrorism. This is the base on which the modern terroristic dictatorships have flourished. In a sense, they are the sole alternative and antipode to democracy. Modern bureaucratization of

all forms of life not only makes it possible to "lead" the masses but also is susceptible of becoming the tool of a demagogic clique and the authoritarian organization associated with it, for the definitive eviction of freedom.

I would not think of proclaiming this transformation of modern bureaucracy and rationalization into dictatorship as inevitable. After the terrible example which mankind recently experienced with the substitution of terroristic dictatorship for democracy in Germany, I will still maintain that those countries are, above all, most immune to it which have a historically-rooted tradition of liberty or, whenever challenged, have proved capable of soon re-establishing it anew. For countries like Switzerland or the Netherlands, for Sweden and Norway, for England and the United States, political freedom as a decisive counterweight to totalitarianism is virtually innate, as far as we can see today; their peoples seem to take freedom as much for granted as they do the limbs for the survival of the body. The problem facing *these* countries is limited to the first two aspects outlined above: the challenge of weakening, narrowing, and atrophying private initiative due to an unhealthy growth of bureaucracy and uniformity through modern techniques of standardization. But all three consequences must be understood as elements present in modern society, and must be grasped in their technical aspects as well.

Next to the *casern,* the factory provided the second locus around which the modern trend toward rationalization and mechanization could crystallize. Historically, it is a matter of sheer accident that the factory system arose, of all things, under modern capitalism. Generally speaking, the factory is a purely cultural product: a Socialist system employing techniques and rational organization needs it as imperatively as does capitalism. But to the extent to which our large-scale existence demands effective organization in large units—for rational reasons of competition as well as because of the inherent nature of its dimensions—the principles of the factory system and the concomitant bureaucratization of institutions cannot be evaded. Perhaps spontaneous and free motivating forces of unbureaucratic hue could be injected into our social bloodstream. But even these must fit in with the overall skeleton—unless we wish artificially to preserve elements incommensurate with the great dimensions of our days; unless, so to speak, we choose to perpetuate forcibly isolated little hothouses around which the air of the wide spaces is allowed freely to circulate. Today most of

the problems we here face can be correctly seen, felt, and dealt with only within this larger radius. Not only in the technical but especially in the mental and political realm there are definite limits beyond which there is no escape from the organization of society into large units, no escape from the bureaucratization connected with it.

Let us draw the consequences.

There exist today very substantial tendencies which, while of sharply anti-fascist and anti-Nazi persuasion, *should* be anti-totalitarian as well, but which in effect represent but a different form of totalitarianism. Or else, in the sincere belief of working for human liberty and emancipation, they paradoxically further a process of all-bureaucratic enslavement, because they ignore the dangers outlined above. One such trend is Communism, in its current edition at least; official contemporary Democratic Socialism is the other.

Both are fanatically centralist and rationalist. Therein they are the genetic heirs of the nineteenth century. Present-day Communism sacrifices the rights of the individual and freedom in favor of the complete liquidation of the upper classes and the elimination of all productive private capital. This transformation, it holds, can be achieved only by totalitarian means, and for its achievement no sacrifice is too great. One cannot argue with such a radical attitude, as it is based on a peculiar scale of values. "Classical" Socialism, on the other hand, today passionately defends the democratic scale of values. But its actions lead it to a double paradox.

Constricted to the old, mid-nineteenth century formulae which stem from Marx' revelation of the nature of capitalism, this classical socialism looks for its panacea to the "*socialization* of the means of production," which is to bring in the wake of the elimination of private capital's power position the emancipation of the proletariat. This slogan, intentionally couched in very general and vague terms by Marx and Engels, is so fascinating in an atmosphere imbued with the tradition of class struggle that when the modern Socialist seeks to mold it into a plank or political program, can think of nothing better than the nationalization—or, coin a term, *etatization*—of the means of production. Enraptured as he is, he fails to perceive the danger of the unheard-of strengthening of concentrated and ubiquitous bureaucracy, which would transform the anticipated emancipation of the masses into its antithesis. The classical Socialist is oblivious of the danger of en-

slavement by the State and does not notice that he is in effect advocating state socialism—on the model once favored by those to whom civil liberties mattered little and the authoritarian state meant much. He who really should know something about historical dialectics, fails to perceive that he becomes its victim.

The other paradox consists in the sign of equality which the contemporary Social-Democrat, taking the State to be his only universe of discourse, places between public planning and Socialism. Planned economy as such—as imperative as it may be within limits under the present circumstances—has little to do with Socialism, *i.e.* with the emancipation of the masses. Planning in the economic sphere may mitigate crimes and blunt the impact of the resulting phenomenon of mass unemployment. But beyond this, it is merely a technique arising from such deficiency situations as result from war and economic disorder. That is why today planning is so widely accepted. But its impressive propagation, in turn, is apt to lead once again towards omnipotent bureaucracy, killing off in the process the end goal of Socialism —Freedom.

We who see these dangers—what can we do about them? Some will tell us that what we need is to organize society in smaller units, substitute federalism for centralism with its lethal tendencies. The limits within which this recipe can be carried out have already been outlined. They are—to repeat myself—partly material, and just as important, partly psychological and mental. Federalism creates, not less bureaucracy, but more. Under it, the unpenetrable abodes of officialdom multiply, in which decisions of greatest portent are made without the participation of the public. The same is true wherever a great-dimensional whole is split up under the slogan of federalism. The necessary decisions will still have to be made at the center in a bureaucratic manner. What you have then accomplished is the replacement of *one* bureaucracy by several superimposed bureaucracies—those of the subordinate limbs and that at the center—which co-exist under superfluous and paralyzing complications. The material limits for all forms of federalism are thus clearly indicated.

The over-expansion of the federative idea is just as dangerous in the political and mental sense. It fosters and facilitates rule and abuse by all sorts of small bureaucratic cliques. What we need today in the sphere of mind and politics is not the confinement to small empty rooms but, on the contrary, the approximation of the global and telluric, the

espousal of dimensions which encompass all humanity. There, on the higher rung, federalism for the new and greater entities is again indicated. Federalism on such a higher level is probably the only salvation for Europe.

Of course every nation should organize on the richest possible communal and regional basis; and, depending on its traditions, it may follow the pattern of federation and *Bundesstaat*: of course, local government should remain as untouched as possible and be permitted to mold itself independently to a maximal extent. Of course small, historically warranted states have a right to exist today—especially today—along with the emerging supernational federations; above all, they have a moral function to fulfill. One must not forget, however, that those questions which are of moral and political importance are being settled not in small but in increasingly large entities and demand solution on such vast dimensions.

The most radical enemy of modern bureaucracy, one who has recognized its menace with considerable clairvoyance, is *neo-liberalism*. In strange ways this new and growing school of thought is at times wedded to the neo-federalist trend. The reason for this alliance is the tendency to misread the signs of the time—a tendency noticeable in both these movements. In neo-federalism it is the vision of an organically-germinating, easily scannable *small* unit of social organization that distorts the outlook, as it appears to require little bureaucracy and would seem to engender democratic spontaneity. In neo-liberalism it is romantic oblivion to the fact that since the 19th century we have had monopoly capitalism, which cannot be done away with by evading the word "capitalism" or by prohibiting its symptoms—cartels, syndicates, and trusts—and seeking to re-establish free competition with all its rules of the game. Such business combinations are but the forms in which the accumulative tendencies of capital find expression, which aim at the establishment of overt or covert monopolies and, in one form or another, do indeed, set up monopolies—unless they themselves are extinguished. Pretty verbiage about the restitution of competition and the prohibition of monopolies are of no use. Such legislation merely trims the beard, so to speak, without touching the foundations on which monopolies thrive. All sacrifices before the altar of competition are doomed to be futile whenever the market is dominated by some four or ten big business enterprises whose captains, over a glass of whiskey, can decide upon the conditions under which they will supply the

market in what amounts to monopolistic or quasi-monopolistic manner. The efforts of the neo-liberals, well-meant as they are, can therefore be of only limited practical value, for they come as little to grips with the bases of bureaucratization as with the effective diversion of totalitarianism, whose menace they see but fail to trace to the end. Their approach is romantic—and this is an age which, whether it likes it or not, requires economic planning.

I can see but one effective barrier to these dangers: a new form of Socialism, distinct from its classical form. It must be a Socialism which, taking account of the social framework within which bureaucracy exists as a universal and inescapable trend, infuses organized counterforces into this framework in order to salvage liberty and accordingly seeks to exert a systematic influence on state and society. It must *socialize* all those segments of economy which have become monopolistic, bureaucratic, hence ripe for socialization—and thereby shatter the power of capitalist bureaucracy. It must do so not in order to replace private bureaucracy with state bureaucracy—*i.e.* merely change masters—in order to establish a society in which (along with a necessarily nationalized and bureaucratic transportation, communications, and supply system) all other monopolies are broken, dissolved into public, corporate-socialist, autonomous units which as free units on the market can survive in the form of such rationally-necessary technical organisms as public foundations, socially-useful concessions, or public corporations which would be constrained to adopt socialist behavior and organization. *This means above all: production without the capitalist profit motive; election of boards of directors by those concerned; a voice, and concern for the furtherance of the interests of the workers.* Such socialist organs, freely co-existing, would have to be under the control of economic senates, part of the judicial arm, which would be entirely independent of all influence of political parties. This would be a form of industrial organization which, once the above conditions are fulfilled, could even make possible the reduction of bureaucratic planning along socialist lines, after the elimination of present economic shortages of production. Next to these organs there must be "democratic partnership" of employees in the economic sphere, on the model of most recent English practice in the non-socialized branches of economy; and the establishment of a network of production co-operatives in agriculture so as to reduce even there the bureaucracy of planning. It must be a Socialism whose *politi-*

cal orientation would aim at undermining bureaucracy's intellectual and moral tendency to domineer. It must aim at reducing bureaucracy to its necessary technical functions.

These are but a few practical features, easy to multiply, of such a new, thoroughly realistic, Socialist orientation, which would aim at the emancipation, not only of the working class, but of the population as a whole. To this end—by transformation or, whenever impossible, by restrictions—it would infuse spontaneous forces in order to counteract the bureaucratization of societal life, to render totalitarianism impossible and, at the same time, to realize freedom for all mankind.

I have been compelled to ask myself bluntly whether human history is to end where it began more than 5,000 years ago; whether mankind is to lose the freedom it gained at such a high price in the course of its existence; whether it is to trade in its liberty for a man-made dungeon just as it once exchanged the barbaric absence of restrictions for a hierocracy that guided and shaped its existence? Such a monstrous and grotesque parody of all meaningful history is not inevitable. What I have sought to do is to stake out the road along which, perhaps, it is possible to escape it.

THE "NATIONALIZED" WORKER

Victor Alba

During the past fifteen years, I have been an eye-witness, as observer and participant, to four of the most important experiments in nationalization which have been undertaken in democratic, capitalist countries—in France, Great Britain, Mexico, and Spain. Although I cannot speak of the Soviet experiment from first-hand experience, this need not necessarily detract from the value of my observations, since Soviet conditions are not applicable elsewhere.

As I am not a politician, the accusation of sabotage—in the context of nationalizations—levelled against the British Conservatives, the Mexican "Porfirists," and the French and Spanish Communists, have not impressed me particularly. It is natural that there should be sabotage by the Conservatives who want to regain their property, and by the Communists who want to prevent any economic recovery not under direct Soviet control. However, in the course of study and observation as a journalist, I have been impressed by the fact that neither sabotage nor economic failure would be important if there were not a psychological problem which the practicing politicians and ecoonomists tend to ignore or treat inadequately. A preliminary examination of the different workers' attitudes towards nationalization and a brief resume of the four experiments is indispensible for the understanding of the human and psychological factors involved.

I

Before the Popular Front period, the Communists treated nationalization and other structural reforms as devices worthy only of those moderates whose aim it was to strengthen capitalism. After the Popular Front, they supported nationalization as a means of controlling part of the economy not yet under their domination. They were capable, if necessary, of disrupting the economic life of the country by sabotage, and in this way discrediting the Socialist Party and weakening the workers' confidence in moderate measures. Thus the Communists use nationalization as a tactical expedient and not as a means in itself.

Socialists believe that though nationalization is not socialism, it nevertheless prepares the ground for its peaceful achievement and strengthens the practice of democracy within a capitalist framework already weakened by structural reform. Desirous of the immediate well-being of the workers, they believe that nationalization can assure a better standard of living for the working class and lower middle class and also destroy the political influence of the great corporations and financial families. Thus, socialists consider nationalization not only as a means to an end, but also as a desirable achievement in itself.

The anarchists consider nationalization as the "vanguard of communal living within a society based on private property." The Trotskyites, on the other hand, refuse to admit that nationalization has any intrinsic value; they attack it first as a means of strengthening capitalism by removing the burden of unprofitable industries and, secondly, because nationalization permits the masses to dream of the possibility of socialism without revolution. We should also note, for the record, the entire group of Christian-Democratic parties, trade-unions, and the Fascist organizations which support nationalization in order to appear "revolutionary."

All these divergent viewpoints coincide nevertheless at one point: most nationalization is not in itself socialism but a step in that direction —a rehearsal for it. It also becomes a guarantee of political democracy insofar as it emphasizes, however little, economic democracy. Nationalization is a means. As such, account must be taken of its aim and of the material it uses for this purpose. The first is the preoccupation of economists and politicians; the second is also their concern though they seem to have forgotten it. *The core of the problem is not in industrial statistics but in the human material of nationalization—in the workers, the technicians and employees whose efforts will determine its success and who, in the last analysis, should profit from it.* In reality, nationalization proposes the reversal of the relation between cause and effect. For the aim of socialism, stated generally, emphasizes the human before the economic. The human element, therefore, should be studied, evaluated, and always fully considered. Until now, the worker has been asked to redouble his efforts—this without the knowledge of whether his education, professional and civic training and working-class traditions have prepared him for something more than a mere increase in production. In other words, is he prepared for the complete

transformation of working-class mentality, for an apprenticeship in community spirit?

In analyzing each of the four cited national situations, I shall not consider the myth, so often accepted thoughtlessly, and which has guided the workers' movement until now: the belief that the worker and the bourgeois are intrinsically different, that they have not only opposing but also different desires, ambitions and hopes. This formulation disregards the fact that both groups live in a society dominated by private ownership of the means of production, and that both breathe same economic oxygen of the profit quest.

II

The Spanish working-class movement is essentially trade-unionist by tradition and composition. Even the powerful Socialist and Anarchist political groups based their strength on the unions. Thus, when the Civil War made it necessary to administer vital industries, as well as those whose proprietors were fighting for Franco, this administration automatically took the form of "socialization" (the name was chosen in order to assure the support of the anarchists who always tend, at least in form, to respect the "eternal principles.") War industries, transportation, streetcars, electricity, gas, water, were all socialized, with each enterprise administered by the trade union concerned. Small or medium-sized enterprises deprived of proprietory ownership by the war were turned over to committees elected in the trade-union framework by their respective workers.

Each enterprise distributed its profits in part among its workers, technicians and employees, and in part to the trade-union in order to make up the deficit of the losing enterprises. In the country, the acreage abandoned by the landowners was organized on a collective basis, with the administration divided between elected committees of laborers and directly interested employees. The result, particularly in the semi-nationalized businesses, was that an employer-mentality developed in each committee and each enterprise. The firms became closed corporations, and during hostilities, the committees themselves tried to find surplus food for their workers and sold their products on the black market. Direct barter between enterprises producing complementary products developed spontaneously. The living conditions of these who—because of their profession or lack of employment in nationalized industry—did not benefit from a committee became more difficult. Therefore, discon-

tent increased while production, even that of war materials, decreased. As a consequence, there were some prosperous nationalized enterprises (often due to black market transactions) while others were on the brink of financial disaster and were supported only by trade-union and government help.

At the beginning of the Civil War it was believed that since Franco was fighting to defend private property in its feudal form, the Republic should create a new order of property which without being socialistic (the international situation would not allow this) would at least represent some kind of economic democracy. Political conflict should, in theory at least, be accompanied by corresponding economic changes. But in practice the employer was merely replaced in quantity by one hundred or one thousand, and the proletariat ended the war not only defeated in arms but deprived of power. The worker felt inadequate because he had not been successful in administration, and guilty because of his own misbehavior in the rear, while the best of his comrades fought at the front and did not compute their hours of fighting nor the calories they ate. Though nationalizations were not a cause of the Republic's failure, they certainly would have been a focus of discontent and unrest if the Republic had won.

III

Twenty years after the democratic revolution which has erroneously been termed "Socialist," General Cardenas, after his election to the Mexican presidency, adopted what might be called socialist measures. He nationalized the oil-fields (the last indemnities of which have just been paid), distributed land by creating "ejidos," and gave the trade-unions political influence which they could not have achieved by their own efforts. Although the Mexican trade-union movement is strong in numbers, it is weak in principles and totally lacking in ideals or even revolutionary aspirations. It is also enervated by rivalry among its leaders. It is in the trade unions that we must look for the real effects of nationalization. The oil fields have been administered by a government-controlled corporation, and although the "ejidos" are directed by committees elected by their members, these members are almost all Indians with little background or adequate concepts of administration or politics.

The net results of nationalization to date have been a decline in production, and a development of the feeling for group-private property.

Mexico's tremendous wealth, however, permits hope for the eventual success of these nationalizations, despite the fact that they were prematurely if courageously instituted by General Cardenas at considerable expense to the entire country. For Mexico, this experiment was necessary in order to prevent a return to an even lower political level than that which antedated the democratic revolution.

IV

In France, too, the trade unions dominate the workers' movement. When, during the first Popular Front Blum government in 1936, the Bank of France was nationalized in fact if not in law, and when after Liberation, the key industries—mines, steel, transportation, and electricity—were put at the country's disposal, the administrators were recruited from the trade unions, although the State appointed some of them.

The workers in the nationalized industries are the best paid in France. The miners, for example, are the only group whose salary has always anticipated the rising prices by several weeks. This policy has necessitated a rise in the price of coal, gas, electricity and transportation. Here, too, the feeling of group-private property and the tendency to create a caste—thereby forgetting the social and economic ties which bind them to the rest of the people—has manifested itself. Obviously, because of French political conditions, this negative evolution has also been colored by the political struggle between the Socialists and Communists within the nationalized industries. The Communists have plainly demonstrated that they are using the nationalizations as part of their immediate policy of gaining support and paying off their supporters with sinecures, and of directing the French economy to chaos or full production depending on the international interests of the USSR.

V

There is inconsiderable Communist strength in Great Britain. Thus the nationalizations voted by the Labor majority in Parliament are not surrounded by political manoeuvres of significance from this quarter. The British workers, reflecting the general atmosphere, have a deeply ingrained community spirit. If their Marxist training has been weak, their political education has been more substantial because of the fact that the trade unions belong to the Labor Party and have, therefore,

participated in the politics and government of the State. The effort of the British miners, for example, has no parallel in any of the nationalizations examined previously. Nevertheless, in talking with them or with the transportation workers, I realized that the feeling for group private property existed even here and was taking root; this, however, was somewhat tempered by the fact that the British are, to a certain extent, guided by the social function of property.

We are forced, therefore, to conclude that nationalization under capitalism tends to create a caste consciousness in the proletariat while still preserving the forms of solidarity which have been the strength and moral power of the workers' movement. This new feeling is opposed to that sense of the community which alone can give nationalization its human feeling, while at the same time affirming and reinforcing its economic efficiency.

Two common factors are perceivable in the four experiments discussed. First, there is the fact that the trade union movement is more important in these four countries than is workers' political activity. Secondly, there is the fact that the workers in nationalized industries develop a feeling of caste or clan.

The trade union movement created in the proletariat what might be called the psychology of the immediate. The fight has always been for immediate demands—salary, working conditions, labor legislation, etc. Solidarity, in these cases, takes almost tangible form—strike funds, aid for the children of imprisoned comrades, resistance to police provocation. In general, the worker who has had only trade union training has a magnificent pugnaciousness but lacks tenacity and his vision is necessarily limited to the immediate objective.

Since the trade union is officially apolitical, the ideological education of the worker, his understanding of the economic mechanisms of capitalist society, is at present limited to a very simplified and schematic analysis of the present possibilities in his own industry. He rarely perceives the entire structure with its contradictions, and is not aware therefore of the influences which this structure has upon his own attitudes. In other words, and this is not intended in a derogatory manner, the trade union movement has instilled in the worker the desire to become a member of the lower middle class, it has brought to his attention what he has in common with other men and not what sets him apart.

The worker only becomes conscious of what is strictly proletarian

when he adopts an authentically proletarian ideology. It is only through an ideological analysis of his society that the worker can achieve the realization that he belongs to a different class, and that it is in his own interest to ally himself with that class, not only for immediate economic gains but also in his thinking and way of life. Only when the worker realizes that the common welfare depends ultimately upon him, will nationalization assume a new aspect. It will cease being merely a means to improve his economic status and will become something genuinely creative.

Before nationalization, the worker feels that he is working basically for his employer's profits. In a nationalized enterprise, however, under trade union control, he knows that he is producing to raise, in a collective sense, *his* own living standard. But this can only be true when nationalization is accomplished (as is partially the case in Great Britain) in a socialist atmosphere, when the worker *feels* that he is contributing to the creation of something new, that he is actively transforming and moulding, that he is, in essence, building a different society. A trade unionist thinks that nationalization has been achieved only for his narrow interests. A socialist worker feels that its aim is to help everyone, for society as a whole. This spells the difference between failure and success.

VI

Until now, nationalization has always been carried on in a trade union atmosphere. This is the reason for its partial success. Its lacks are not the fault of the trade unions—they cannot be what they are not. Nor is it the workers' fault, who can only be what the trade unions and capitalism have fashioned of them. It should not, therefore, be concluded that nationalization should not be adopted while the working class does not have a socialist perspective. The proletariat does not have so many opportunities under private enterprise as to be able to waste any possibility of nationalization. On the contrary, if the worker cannot direct or administer, if he doesn't possess full realization of his social responsibility, it is much better that he learn this under capitalism than to wait for the distant day when a socialist regime might suffer from this double ignorance. Nationalization should not be avoided under the pretext of a false puritanism when in reality it is because of the fear of heavy responsibility.

At the end of the First World War, the socialist movement tried to avoid power, even when the masses urged it to take power (thus

leaving a free field to the newly-born Communist movement), because its leaders thought it preferable that bourgeois politicians grapple with the responsibility of rebuilding the world which they themselves had destroyed. Therefore, apprenticeship in power and in the leadership of the community remained unachieved. Conditions have changed at the end of the Second World War. Socialists have taken power everywhere where they could count on the confidence of the working and lower middle classes. They have made errors, some of which have been very serious. The nationalizations which they undertook have not always been brilliantly successful. But, in spite of all this, the proletariat is finally serving its apprenticeship in responsibility. It is learning how to direct and, gradually—with time, failure and sacrifices—it will also learn to feel itself the master of the future, the class on which the future depends. This is not an empty oratorical phrase—the facts show that when the workers have this feeling, they succeed remarkably well. And if there are failures in their attempts, these are not, in any case, more serious than the repeated and predictable failure of a completely developed and experienced capitalism which does not have in its favor the assurance of creating, and of building and moulding a different society.

If giving the worker management know-how is all that is demanded of nationalization, it will perhaps never be a failure. Nationalization would really become a step towards socialism if the working class were given the political consciousness that its trade unions cannot provide, and if, in the future, advantage were taken of the errors made in previous experiments. Then the workers would be "nationalized" at the same time as the industries. If not, they will become an arm of capitalism. The final result of nationalization, therefore, depends completely on the socialists.

HOW DEGRADED IS AMERICAN CULTURE?

William Isaacs and Jules Kolodny

The American nightmare has taken the place of the American dream, and it is as sentimental as its predecessor, as popular and as widely believed in.—Partisan Review.

The disparagement of American culture has been a common practice for many years. In 1820, the *Edinburgh Review* appraised our culture as distinctly low brow. "During the thirty or forty years of their independence," it declared, "they have done absolutely nothing for the Arts, for literature. . . . In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book?—or goes to an American play?—or looks at an American picture or statue?" This point of view still has many dogmatic adherents today.

Expatriates, *avantgarde* writers, literary editors of liberal journals and Marxian critics remain firm in their conviction that America is "culturally a barren wasteland." Henry Miller, who prefers the Left Bank of the Seine to any part of the United States, has bitterly indicted this nation and its 140 million people as an "air-conditioned nightmare." Margaret Marshall, literary editor of *The Nation,* indignantly declared that the substitute for culture in America "is a commercial commodity known as entertainment . . . aimed at . . . (the) subnormal intelligence." James Farrell, of the unorthodox Marxist literary Left, holds that American culture is characterized by an "inner emptiness."

The latest to enter the ranks of those who decry the low level of American culture is Kurt List, musician and music critic, who contends we are living in an age, in which "all art is abandoned" (in the May, 1947, issue of *Modern Review*). "What is actually under the box top labelled 'culture'," he argues, "is a watered down unreasonable facsimile."

According to List, even *avantgarde* intellectualism has deteriorated to a pseudo-art. He sees hardly any distinction between the "straight commercial enterprises" and "the art practiced by the intelligentsia in small music societies, small galleries, little theatre movements and little magazines. . . ." In List's opinion no one has escaped.

"Even leftist political expression," he writes, "has been so infected by commercialism that it needlessly adheres to market values."

Thus as much as Henry Miller, Margaret Marshall, James Farrell and Kurt List may differ among themselves—and they differ very considerably—they are one in maintaining that our movies, best sellers, swing bands, and mass circulation magazines are unmistakable manifestations of a bastard culture.

In re-examining the perennial indictment of American culture, we are prepared to make many concessions. Americans are essentially a gadget-minded, acquisitive, pecuniary, and politically immature people whose culture reflects, in great part, their mass-production mindedness. Magazines, movies, books, and music are turned out at cultural levels which can be understood, appreciated, and above all, *sold* on a volume basis. The profit motive unquestionably dominates most art and literature.

The excessive bent for business, and the inanities fostered by the radio and the movies mitigate against the development and popularization of serious culture. A handful of high-pressure literary men, the leaders of America's intellectual assembly line, do the nation's thinking and writing, and pick its plays and books. List, of course, is correct in his charge that the Judsons dominate the entire field of concert music.

But granting all this, one must still ask: do opportunities for creating and appreciating higher art exist in the United States comparable with those found abroad? Does the existence of inferior art seriously act as a barrier to those who aspire to genuine culture, however they conceive it? These are the real questions. We doubt whether the answers given by many literary critics, *avantgardists,* and expatriates present the situation adequately.

We may perhaps be mistaken in our analysis, but it is our reasoned conclusion that although American culture may indeed be in a very bad way, as its critics maintain, it is just about what can be expected under *any* social system where mass education prevails and where people are not coerced into cultural molds by government decrees.

There are several clues to an understanding of why Europe seemed so much more cultured to critical Americans in the pre-war years.

First and foremost was its educational system. Most Europeans got less schooling than did most Americans; they received an education

which laid greater stress on learning a trade and earning a living. Those few Europeans who reached the universities were given a more thorough and intensive training in classical antiquity and the humanities. The fads and frills of American colleges—Greek-letter fraternities, winning football teams, and dancing—were largely unknown. The result was the co-existence in Europe of a small, scholarly, intellectual elite to whom art and culture were serious matters, and a large mass of people who were barely touched by the kind of music, magazines, and novels which flourished in America for our better-educated but non-intellectual masses.

Economic conditions also aided in fostering the notion of Europe's cultural superiority. The standard of living of most European white collar and factory workers was far below that of American workers. There was, consequently, no comparable mass market for comic books, cheap novels, jazz phonograph records, and movies simply because there wasn't enough money to go around. The grocer, the butcher, the tailor, and the landlord got in ahead of dispensers of low-brow art.

It is possible to conclude, therefore, that European culture seemed superior to our own because it was restricted to a very select few. Europeans were fed less trash simply because there wasn't any market for it, or because no market had ever been developed, and not because European mass literary and artistic tastes were necessarily higher.

Unlike Europe, the trends towards mass education in the United States since the turn of the century have been unmistakable. Compulsory education laws have raised the level of literacy. Add to this a higher wage level, a relatively lower expenditure for food, shelter and clothing, and more energetic and aggressive business men. The result has been the growth of mass culture industries: comic books, popular novels, picture magazines and newspapers, jazz bands, night clubs, and Hollywood movies.

If the level of culture in Europe was not as high as it was reputed to be, neither has it been as low in the United States as its critics have claimed. *Avantgardists* may turn up their noses with considerable justification at many of the acclaimed pot-boilers which sell by the hundreds of thousands, and are tripe, pure and simple. They may likewise condemn the mass literary mind which book-of-the-month clubs create. But, in addition to the tripe, one does find published the writings of Dos Passos, Hemingway, Dreiser, Fauulkner, James and others. American publishers have also found ready markets for Europe's most

distinguished writers, past and present: Dostoevsky, Galsworthy, Mann, Joyce, Rilke, Kierkegaard, and Kafka. The *Modern Library,* the *World Classics,* and *Everyman's Library* have phenomenal yearly sales. In these popular editions, Malraux, Gide, Freud, Bergson, and Proust are steady sellers. One hundred million pocket-size editions are also sold annually in the United States (*Bantam, Avon, Penguin, Pocket Book,* and *American Mercury Books*). Although they run the gamut of everything, they do include such authors as Homer, Shaw, Fitzgerald, Zola, Shakespeare, and Hardy. It is not unfair to ask whether Europe ever did better. Are the *Pelican* or the *Tauschnitz* editions supeorior to their American counterpart? Are they more widely read and circulated?

Strangely enough, the large sale of fine books in inexpensive editions has given rise to the false notion that mass-disseminated art can't possibly be the genuine things. Instead of applauding the fact that the publishing industry has finally come around to investing in twenty-five cent editions of Shakespeare, Homer, Shaw, and James, critics of American culture bemoan the fact. Is the *Odyssey* any less significant because it is sold on drug store counters for a quarter? Does Joyce's *Ulysses* lose its importance because it is widely distributed in the *Modern Library?*

If the American Babbit is a distasteful creature, so are his prototypes abroad. Do all Frenchmen devour Gide and Proust? Are the essays on Existentialism by Sartre and Camus read as avidly as the latest *roman policier?* Are Auden and Eliot best sellers in England, or Croce in Italy?

The smug Englishmen depicted by E. M. Forster aren't particularly cultured; neither are the French petite bourgeoisie of Andre Gide's *Counterfeiters,* nor the Italian peasants of Ignazio Silone's novels. And if New York and a few others large American cities are oases in an intellectual desert, so are London, Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. (Paris, incidentally, is *sui generis;* it is so cosmopolitan and has such a long and great tradition that it has been called the cultural capital of the world with considerable justification. But Paris, clearly, is an exception.) Our own Main Street may be dry and barren, and indifferent to cultural values, but no more so than the Main Streets of French, Italian and English towns and villages, where the arts are equally conspicuous by their absence.

Publishers' sales records disclose what many critics do not: the

American people afford a more fertile literary market—*at all levels*—than any other people in the world! The percentage of scholars and serious thinkers in America is easily as large as Europe's, but they are lost in the shuffle and are outshouted by the advertisers, the publicity men, the book-club editors, the radio commentators, and the jazz band leaders.

In the field of periodical literature, the number of magazines giving serious attention to art and literature has also been slowly growing. The virtues of these magazines, according to Malcolm Cowley, are "good taste, independence of commercial standards, real learning and critical acuteness." It is true that these little magazines—*Partisan Review, Accent, The Antioch Quarterly, Western Review, Chimera, Quarterly Review of Literature, Sewanee Review* (about which T. S. Eliot said, "I wish that we had in England a periodical occupying an analogous position"), and others—can't compete for mass support with the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Life,* nor, for that matter, with the *Saturday Review of Literature;* nor can they be picked up at every terminal like *True Life, Romance* and *Detective Story.* But they can be obtained and they are more widely read than ever before. If New York newsstands are dominated by pulp fiction, so are the London and the Paris stalls. They all abound in endless varieties of trash.

In the field of literary criticism, the general outlook is very much the same. The pronouncements of such popular reviewers as Clifton Fadiman may not strike a responsive chord among those who profess to know. But not all criticism is carried on at a level which is calculated to be cultural, inspirational, and financially profitable. There are book reviewers and there are literary critics. Despite their differences in viewpoint and perspective, Edmund Wilson, Philip Rahv, William Troy, F. O. Mathiessen, Alfred Kazin, and Lionel Trilling have all distinguished themselves by literary criticism of an extremely high order, which caters neither to the masses nor to the publishing magnates.

Of Edgar Guests there is no end. But serious poets have also managed to thrive. Robinson, Frost, Sandburg, MacLeish, and Wylie are widely read. There is also a limited but ever-increasing reading public for the works of the younger poets: Karl Shapiro, Randall Jarrell, Kenneth Fearing, James Laughlin, Frederic Prokosch, and Delmore Schwartz. It is extremely questionable to assume that American publishers are investing in this type of literature for a non-existent reading audience.

Although expatriates, *avantgardists,* and Marxists are very often sound in their criticism of specific aspects of American culture, many of their complaints stem from their own personal shortcomings.

Some of the smaller fry who look askance at the "degradation of culture" are suffering from inferiority complexes; they are envious because they lack a capacity for turning out best sellers which the book clubs and Hollywood will grab up. They can't compete, nor make the grade; hence their disparagement of *all* American culture, and their hegira to another land which they consider better and fairer, where they believe talent is more genuinely appreciated, and where, at any rate, the signs and symbols of failure are not so brazenly flaunted before their eyes.

Finally, what seems most fundamental and basic in the attitude of many critics of American culture is their snobbery and anti-democratic bias. Some time ago, Evelyn Waugh compared the United States and Europe. "Instead of the Liberty, Equality and Fraternity of the Americas," he declared, "Europe offers its artists Liberty, Diversity and Privacy. Perhaps it is for this that so many of the best American writers go abroad."

Expatriates, particularly, seem to resent living in a democratic world ideologically dominated by those whom they regard as their intellectual inferiors. They would prefer (and this is the impression they give) to live in a society ruled by an intellectual elite, where the common man knows his place and duly recognizes his betters, and where there is no need to fear the competition of the democratically-educated masses. The political principles of the expatriates correlate closely with their aesthetic views. Small wonder that Ezra Pound and Santayana were both able to live unmolested under a fascist regime which harried Silone and his kind from the land. (Pound actively supported fascism; Santayana silently and passively endured it.)

If Gertrude Stein, Santayana and others have found that the American scene stifles their creative talents, it is not unfair to point out that many expatriates have discovered Europe to be equally disappointing. Robert Frost, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Elinor Wylie, Thomas Wolfe, and others who went abroad in search of a more favorable climate and soil returned, if not disillusioned at least convinced that the grass is no less green in America. There is also little evidence to show that the writings of those Americans who remained at home are

inferior to those who lived abroad. Indeed, Faulkner, Caldwell, Dos Passos, and Steinbeck have international followings. They are read in France, to quote one of the more critical magazines, with "intense admiration."

The fundamental question which most critics of American culture have failed to answer satisfactorily is just this: What *can* one expect culturally of a nation of 140 million people of diverse interests and backgrounds, and with varying capacities and intellects? From the tone and attitude of many critics it would seem that they would be satisfied only with a nation which demands Shaw, Shakespeare and Aeschylus in the theatre, which will insist upon nothing less than Brahms, Bach, and Debussy in the concert hall or on the radio, and which will read and discuss only such figures as Proust, Kafka, and James. However desirable, culture can never be geared to the highest level of the professionals and the intellectuals of a nation. This is the reality which must be faced. It would be nice to have a nation of scholars and thinkers; it would also be nice to have a world of peace and good will.

Different levels of culture are inevitable among all people in all types of society—the United States no less than France, Germany or the Soviet Union. America's vast technology and growing system of free education have tended to make the differences more pronounced in this country. At no time is more than a small fraction of the population of *any* nation likely to concern itself with serious culture.

Marxists of all persuasions like to blame the "degraded state of mass culture" on American capitalism, which is certainly at fault to a considerable extent. But how much better off, culturally, are writers and the great masses of people in the Soviet Union?

A writer in the Soviet Union may unexpectedly find himself fallen from grace, and quickly consigned to an unknown destination, like Boris Pilniak, whose book, *The Volga Flows Into the Caspian Sea,* was a best seller in the 1930's. Or, equally unexpectedly, a sudden spin of the wheel of fortune, and he is once more restored to good favor, like Ilya Ehrenburg, who, at one time, was on the political blacklist.

Dispatches to the *New York Times* were filled with just such accounts of the high and mighty, and of the smaller fry, too. Sergei Eisenstein forgot that "the cinema is a sharp ideological party weapon"; that "cold and passionless historism" is not enough. Dimitri Shosta-

kovich was reminded that his Ninth Symphony was lacking in "warm ideological convictions" because he "has not overcome in himself the ironical skeptic." Konstantin M. Simonov, the novelist who knows his party line, warned his Soviet colleagues of their obligations to Marxism-Leninism, reminding them that they must stress the "ideological and really human superiority of our people, brought up by our socialist regime." Perhaps only a minority of American artists escapes the evil impact of American commercial values. But *no one* can show any creative independence in the Soviet Union and survive.

And how have the Russian people fared? Large sections are apparently tiring of the party line and want some of the books, poems, and plays popular among the "corrupt" bourgeoisie in capitalist countries, who enjoy "art for art's sake or simply for entertainment." Otherwise there can be no meaning to the periodic drives against what the Soviet authorities call "trivial jazz music," "nonsensical fairy tales," "low-class American and English plays," "empty, vulgar stories," and the tales of Sherlock Holmes, which "poison the mind of the readers" by fostering "a criminal romanticism."

It is also doubtful whether *popular* culture would be very much different in a Socialist America from what it is today. Marxists are just as prone to overestimate the potential literary interests and the general intelligence of most people as they are to mistake their goodness and amenability to moral persuasion in a socialist world. Although a socialist society might eliminate some of the abuses resulting from the commercialization of culture under capitalism, the interest of a very large segment of the population would still be in comic books, true romance, detective stories, and cheap fiction because this stuff fills a deep-seated need in their lives for entertainment, humor, romance and adventure, at their own level. In the absence of cultural control by political directives, it is extremely doubtful whether, in any type of society—capitalist, communist or socialist—Bach will ever supplant Cole Porter, Kafka outsell Kenneth Roberts, or Picasso overshadow Norman Rockwell.

In the years ahead, if Europe does not stagnate, and if another war does not set it aflame, its culture will correlate very closely with its politics. Those countries in the Soviet orbit will have foisted on them the Russian pattern of art-in-the-service-of-the-state. Non-Sovietized Western Europe will tend more and more to accelerate its tempo and fall into the American educational and technological pattern. This

will mean, among other things, mass production, mass education, and mass cultural markets. A dispatch from Paris to the *New York Times Book Review* may foreshadow this very trend: "Before the war, bookstore clients came largely from the middle and upper middle class. Now many working men, waiters, artisans, small civil servants have become book buyers. . . . *Forever Amber,* to the horror of literate French critics, was a sell-out everywhere: 150,000 copies."

For the simple truth seems to be not that America is far behind the European cultural pattern, but rather that, in a world of free education, democracy, and technological development, Western Europe will look to America for a picture of its own cultural future. A frank recognition of this very probable tendency should make it possible for us to view the American cultural pattern in saner perspective. Until the better world of democratic socialism comes, it should also enable us to tell the Henry Millers and the Lists in their own blunt and unmistakable terms that they are pursuing a will-o-the-wisp and searching for a non-existent Eldorado.

THE ORIGINS OF THE HITLER-STALIN PACT

George Denicke

On the night of August 23 to 24, 1939, Stalin, Molotov and Ribbentrop took time out during their talks for an exchange of toasts.

"*I know,*" said Stalin in opening the series of toasts, "*how much the German nation loves its Fuhrer; I should therefore like to drink to his health.*" The most significant toast, however, was proposed by Molotov, who raised his glass to Stalin, reminding those present that the reversal in Soviet-German relations had been brought about by Stalin's March speech, which was "well understood in Germany." Molotov was alluding to Stalin's speech of March 10, 1939 (his report to the 18th Party Congress).

It is true that this speech strongly criticized "aggressive nations like Japan, Germany and Italy," but Stalin's explanation of German aggressiveness sounded almost like a justification of it: "Germany," he said, "which has suffered seriously as a result of the first imperialist war and the Versailles peace, has joined hands with Japan and Italy and demanded the expansion of its territory in Europe and the return of colonies taken from her by the victors in the first imperialist war." Moreover, Stalin had spoken very sharply against the "non-aggressive, democratic countries"—England, France, and the United States. He interpreted their "non-intervention policy" as an attempt to allow the aggressive nations to "embroil themselves in war against the Soviet Union," in order that the warring sides might "exhaust each other," whereupon they themselves would "step in with fresh forces . . . and dictate the weakened combatants their own terms." In conclusion, as one of the goals of his policy, Stalin postulated that Russia "maintain" a vigilant attitude and not permit herself to be drawn into conflicts by warmongers who are accustomed to let others rake their chestnuts out of the fire." The leaders of German foreign policy interpreted this speech as an offer to negotiate. Subsequent events, as well as Ribbentrop's answering toast to Molotov, indicated that Berlin understood it correctly.

These toasts are reported in one of the documents from the archives of the German Foreign Office dealing with "Nazi-Soviet relations during 1939-1941" and published recently by the U. S. State Department.

The very first document in this collection confirms the accuracy of the conclusions drawn from the Molotov toast which came some time later, namely, *that the initiative in the discussions which culminated in the German-Soviet Pact of August* 23, 1939, *was taken by the Soviet side.*

On April 17 the Soviet Ambassador Merekalov called on Ribbentrop's aide, Weizsaecker, and after a conversation about a certain specific question of secondary importance, brought up the general question of German-Soviet relations. As Weizsaecker reported in his memorandum, the Soviet diplomat pointed out that "ideological differences of opinion had hardly influenced the Russian-Italian relationship, and they did not have to prove a stumbling block with regard to Germany either. Soviet Russia had not exploited the present friction between Germany and the Western Democracies; nor did she desire to do so. There exists for Russia no reason why she should not live with us (Germany) on a normal footing. And from normal, the relations might become better and better."

This talk was the beginning of the conversations that led to results of enormous historic importance.

In their earliest period, the discussions were conducted with extreme caution. Each side had many reasons to distrust the other, the German diplomats being especially suspicious that Moscow was setting a trap for them and intended to use the talks to exert pressure upon England and France in order to achieve an agreement with them on terms most favorable to itself. During the second period, when Berlin overcame its suspicions, there was a tendency on the part of the Soviet side to draw out the discussions, just as there was delay and temporizing in the simultaneous talks with England and France, which were conducted openly, in contrast to the strictly secret German negotiations.

In August, when the attack on Poland became a question of the immediate future, German diplomacy began to evidence impatience and even ventured to hint that Soviet Russia might find herself in an extremely unpleasant situation when Germany crushed Poland. Hitler's personal appeal to Stalin put an end to the procrastinations. Ribbentrop arrived in Moscow and the pact was signed. Assuring himself not

only of the neutrality, but also of the assistance—and well-paid assistance at that!—of Soviet Russia, Hitler attacked Poland.

Thus began the Second World War.

The published documents dispel the last shadow of doubt that Moscow knew what the events were leading to; it was forewarned of Hitler's intention to strike at Poland and knew that this was precisely why he hurried the signing of the pact.

The documents disclose certain details which are utterly shocking in their cynicism. Thus, Moscow pledged itself to attack Poland from the rear at some time after Hitler's invasion and to occupy the part of the country allotted to it according to the agreement. But in order to render the attack "plausible to the masses" and "to avoid giving the Soviet Union the appearance of an aggressor," the Soviet Government asked Hitler to agree to its declaration that it was acting to protect the Ukrainians and White Russians "threatened" by Germany! This proved too much for the German side and it categorically rejected such an explanation. But this incident confirms the fact that the basic characteristic of Soviet policy is its complete amorality, its absolute indiscriminateness as to means, and, specifically, its readiness to employ any lie that will serve its purpose. Of this, the recently published documents furnish many new and striking illustrations.

But what was the *essence* of the policy that was being carried out with the aid of such unprecedented cynical means? For the most important problem, the solution of which is aided by the documents, is not "how," but "why" and "what for"?

To give *its own* answer to these questions, the Soviet Government responded to the publication of the documents by the United States with four declarations, in which it shifts from the defense to the offensive—and from arguments to plain vituperation. . . . But it forgets the French proverb: "He who proves too much proves nothing." Its position would have been stronger had it simply declared that its aim was to preserve the country at any cost from the horrors of war and that the only way to avoid war was to enter into an agreement with Hitler. Of course, much could have been said against such a statement, beginning with the argument that an alliance with the Western Democracies could have prevented a world war altogether and thus eliminated the danger of war to Russia as well. However, this cannot be proved with exactness and finality, and things that might have been can always be argued about.

One of the questions that would prove embarrassing to Stalin would be the partition of Poland: why indeed was the division of Poland necessary for the preservation of neutrality? The plea that Russia wanted to strengthen her defensive position in the event of German aggression is most unconvincing, since the creation of a common frontier with Germany clearly did not diminish but increased the danger of attack. Nonetheless, and especially after all that had been done by the Western powers themselves in order to avoid war at all costs, such an argument on the part of the Soviet Government would have made it possible for many people to assert that Stalin had made a mistake but had committed no crime. But the Soviet rulers want above all to be regarded as infallible and strive at all costs to prove that they have not committed any errors. As a result, they confirmed the fact that they had been guilty both of error and of crime.

Assuming the pose of the righteous exposers of the Western powers, they cite a series of commonly known facts as would-be proof that the Western Democracies consciously helped Hitler in order to set him afterwards against Soviet Russia. They speak, for instance, about American credits to Germany, although they know quite well that the flow of these credits had ceased (and had in fact been reversed) several years before Hitler's rise to power. An especially devastating disclosure, to their minds, seems to be the report concerning the talks between the English Minister Hudson and the German economic diplomat Wohltat in June, 1939. But these talks became known immediately and caused a great outcry at the time. Chamberlain demanded an explanation from Hudson and repudiated him. Hudson himself declared that he entered into the talks on his own responsibility and without the knowledge of his government. Nevertheless it was, of course, a huge political scandal. But even Hudson had no insidious designs against Russia, nor any readiness to betray Poland; the scandalous nature of his action consisted in his supposition that it was possible to *persuade* the Hitler Government to abandon its aggressive intentions by granting it a large loan for the overcoming of economic difficulties and the peaceful conquest of markets, and specifically, for its participation in developing the economy of China and wide areas in Africa.

Strong as such illusions had formerly been in the minds of the English and French Governments, Hitler's occupation of Czechoslovakia in March, 1939, caused a radical reversal both in English and in French policy. During the conversations with Soviet representatives

in the summer of 1939, the German diplomats repeatedly pointed out that England was seeking to conspire with Poland towards creating an "encirclement" of Germany. From the reports of Stalin's conversations with Ribbentrop it is entirely clear that Stalin understood that England was trying to organize resistance against German aggression; more than that, he seriously discussed the possibilities of a war by England and France against Germany. In his March speech, Stalin already had said not only that a new imperialist war was inevitable, but that it had already begun.

There are no indications whatever that he was concerned with *preventing war,* and not merely with securing Russia's continued neutrality in the coming war. Seeking agreement with Germany, he pursued a policy which, to say the least, *increased the probability of war.* He practically offered Hitler what the latter wanted most: the possibility of conducting a war on *one* front, since both sides foresaw a rapid liquidation of the Polish front, and the Soviet Union assisted in this liquidation.

In the course of the first weeks, the discussions regarding a rapprochement were conducted mainly by the Chargé of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, Astakhov. And already on May 17, Astakhov declared that the Anglo-Soviet talks were not likely to lead to the results desired by England! Three days later, in Moscow, Molotov stated to the German Ambassador Schulenburg that the Soviet Government would consent to the resumption of trade negotiations only upon the creation of the "political bases" necessary for them.

The same Astakhov emphasized that in foreign policy there were no conflicts between Germany and Soviet Russia. Especially interesting its the remark made by Astakhov on May 30 in his conversation with Weizsaecker. He asserted that the *ideological barrier* between Moscow and Berlin had been erected by the Germans and cited in support of this statement Germany's rejection of *Russia's offer of an alliance* even before the German treaty with Poland. The German-Polish Treaty was concluded in January, 1934, so that the offer of an alliance had been made by Moscow either in 1933 or at the beginning of 1934. Consequently, the Soviet Government was already at that time prepared to untie Hitler's hands, but Hitler himself was not amenable to Russia's advances. It would seem, then, that the Soviet desire for friendship with Hitler's Germany was, so to speak, a constant quan-

tity, and was not realized for a long time only because of Hitler's doctrinaire obstinacy.

But what took place in 1939? The policy of appeasement pursued for a time by England and France was drawing to a close. Further expansion was bound for Germany with the risk of war. The basic problem of German policy was to avoid a long-drawn war on two fronts. When it was no longer possible to neutralize England and France by former diplomatic means, and particularly after England guaranteed Poland's security, Hitler and his diplomats decided to neutralize Russia (which was a difficult decision for the fanatic Hitler). Moscow immediately sensed this change and made Hitler's task easier by taking the initiative in suggesting a rapprochement.

Accepting this rapprochement, Hitler personally was convinced that under such conditions England and France would not venture to fight him and that he would be able to dispose of Poland without provoking a general war. But there are no indications that Stalin shared this conviction. Knowing the general conception underlying Stalin's policy, we must conclude that he *wanted a war* between Germany and the Western Democracies and deliberately abetted Hitler in order to unleash such a war.

The published documents do not, and, being German documents, cannot contain any direct evidence of Stalin's intentions. It is, however, entirely clear that the Soviet side did nothing whatever to restrain Germany's aggressiveness nor to seek some peaceful solution.

Moscow not only did not attempt to dissuade Hitler fom attacking Poland—by offering, let us say, to exert joint diplomatic pressure—but it quite definitely wanted a new partition of Poland, concerning which it made a very detailed and specific agreement with Germany at the time of the conclusion of the pact. And without war such a partition was impossible. The Soviet Government, therefore, wanted not only neutrality but also expansion, at the cost of the blood of others. It not only made no effort to prevent war, but it assisted in unleashing a general European war.

And this is a responsibility of which it cannot divest itself by any clumsy attempts to pin the "warmonger" label to the Western Democracies.

A NEW ORDER FOR ASIA

S. K. Das

Representatives of twenty Asiatic countries have gathered in New Delhi in a Regional Conference of the International Labor Organization. Their objective is to secure through voluntary agreement among member states a higher standard of living for the laboring population of this part of the world and progressive improvements in their conditions of work. It is not part of the work of the I.L.O. in securing these objectives to seek to alter the political circumstances that may limit their achievement. It is nevertheless essential for all those who share the desire to see the vast masses of the peoples of Asia free from the chains of poverty, backwardness, and social oppression, to take into account political factors and seek to overcome political obstacles.

These political factors are not, as Jawaharlal Nehru alleged, in his speech at the opening session, the presence of "metropolitan powers" in Asiatic countries. Despite recent complications in Indonesia and Indo-China, nothing is clearer today than that colonial imperialism is a dying force in Asia. The transfer of power in India and Burma remove any doubt on that score. Replacing imperialism, it is colonial nationalism which is today coming to control the destinies of the Asiatic peoples. It is on this nationalism, therefore, that the task of the achievement of economic liberation of the masses from poverty, ignorance, and disease devolves. The doubt is precisely whether nationalist parties and groups placed in power will be able to solve the economic problems facing their respective countries in a manner which will ensure to the masses of the people economic and political freedom.

To stress this political factor and to entertain such doubts is not in the least to minimize the worth of the efforts of the I.L.O. It nevertheless cannot be overemphasized that improvement or deterioration in the living conditions and status of the laboring population will depend on the economic structure that is built up in these countries, the politics of these states, and the dominating interests of their governments.

Two questions are vital for Asiatic labor, as they are for peoples

and nations the world over. Can nationalism ensure peace? Secondly, can nationalism put into effect the economy of socialism?

Though the second is more fundamental, recent events in India, and the long-drawn-out civil war in China, point to the urgent necessity of elementary security and stability, without which all economic improvements remain impracticable. General unsettled conditions in South East Asia, indeed, have been prevailing after the collapse of Japan at the end of the war. But a much greater evil is the sharpening antagonism within a nation which, pushed to the extreme, can result in such disastrous consequences as have lately overtaken India.

The lesson of large-scale communal rioting in this country should not be missed by other Asiatic countries. It is that the appeal which nationalism makes to people living within particular geographical boundaries inevitably breeds narrower nationalism. This is all the more so if within those boundaries there is market heterogeneity in race, culture or religion. It is following this logic of development that Indian nationalism, regarded as model in other Asiatic countries, has broken up into Hindu and Moslem nationalism drawing the people into the vortex of a communal civil war. It is a mistake to asign the cause of this ugly turn in the political situation in India to the machinations of the departed British. Nor is it reasonable to trace them to economic causes—the explanation in terms of class war.

Those who offer such explanations underestimate the force of nationalism as an ideology, the sentiments and emotions on which the nationalist attitude is based, as well as the political theory of nationalism which justifies such sentiments. The appeal of nationalism is to a common past, to common traditions. When this past happens to differ for the several sections of the people, the same sentiments and loyalties based on them are transferred to narrower sections. This is not logically wrong. Patriotic feeling for a geographically bigger area is not necessarily superior to feeling for a part of that area or for a particular community within it. This disintegration has been experienced in India and there is no doubt that wherever similar conditions are in effect, nationalism will demonstrate the same results.

Asia is a land of many races and many languages, groups of which have frequently been brought together by the conquests of colonial powers without strict regard for ethnic or linguistic homogeneity. Due to foreign subjection, anti-imperialism has acted as an unifying force, but now this factor is disappearing and with it will disappear the bond

which tied the divers sections together unless a new basis of unity is created. Nationalism cannot be that bond except in its openly fascist form.

In Indonesia, there is a Moslem party whose strength was demonstrated by its success in forcing the resignation of Sjahrir as Prime Minister. A separatist movement in outlying parts of the Dutch East Indies also points to the same weakness of nationalism. In Indo-China, similar factors have enabled the French to create rivals to the Viet Minh. These inherent weaknesses of nationalism reduce politics in colonial countries to power politics. The nationalist explanation that all these arise from the divide-and-rule policy of imperialism is not convincing. Unless the weaknesses were present, they could not be exploited. It is wiser to take note of the weaknesses, appreciate their connection with the ideology of nationalism, and strive to harness the energies of the people in creative tasks under a different banner. Following the other alternative a country will experience, like China, grave internecine difficulties resulting from the failure of nationalism to unite the country.

Colonial nationalism thus fails to ensure peace and internal harmony, the indispensable prerequisites of economic betterment. Can it, let us inquire, adopt those economic policies that would solve these problems? Nationalism claims to represent the aspiration of *all* classes within the nation. It strives to secure the interests of *every* section of the community. Its very nature, therefore, puts a limitation on the nature of the economic policies it can adopt—it can never injure the interests of the upper classes. In the past, the economics of nationalism has been capitalism.

On the other hand, *a rising standard of living for the peoples of Asia can be secured only on the basis of a socialist economy.* The experience of India emphasizes this point, and India is the country which has progressed most of the Asiatic countries. And yet, India finds itself today unable to overcome the contradiction between the low purchasing power of the masses and production based on a profit economy. In order to break the vicious circle, one has to strike at the roots of the capitalist system, introduce production for use and harness the entire resources of the people to economic reconstruction through planning. But who will do that? Certainly not nationalists, who claim to serve the interest of capitalists and landlords as members of the nation.

Instances of this failure can be cited from India's experience,

where capitalist interests have a good deal of influence over the National Congress and are represented substantially in the National Government. They control directly the Finance, Commerce, and Transport portfollios, and have besides a trusted friend in the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Patel. It is because of this control by vested interests that spokesmen of the Indian Government have to postulate the solution pressing economic problems on a basis different from that of socialism. They now talk of "control" over labor, in view of the economic crisis, of the "responsibility" of labor, as Pandit Nehru did in the opening session of the I.L.O. conference. The National Government has, of course, gone beyond words. It has assumed power through legislation to restrict labor's freedom of organization and the right to strike. (Industrial Disputes Acts). Recently, it has extended by an Ordinance the ban on strikes in the coal mines. These are indications of a policy more akin to totalitarianism than to democracy. It has to be remembered that such developments are to be expected from nationalism, because it arises from the idea of the unchallengeable supremacy of "national" interests—the interests of national industry, national trade, and the like.

This development in India should provide a clue for the other Asiatic countries. It is true that a number of factors present in India do not hold in the other countries. It might, for instance, be argued that control of the many plantations in the Dutch East Indies can pass directly to the national government, and be developed by them ,without the need to interfere with class relations, and that new industries can be started, owned and worked by the state in a manner in which no section of the population suffers infringement of its interests. These factors do introduce a certain difference. But the problem is not to be viewed in part but in a comprehensive manner, as one of building a new economy replacing the old, and in this there is bound to be opposition from those who have vested interests in present arrangements. *The basic factor which makes a non-profit economy imperative, the low purchasing power of the masses, has almost universal application. To overcome that factor without injuring the existing economic relations is an impossibility.* There are only two developmental alternatives. One, on the basis of democratic socialism, sharply distinguished from nationalism. The other, on the basis of nationalist-capitalism, leading to fascism. The national economy of Japan was developed on the later line and that of India is well on the same way. Those who do not view

history as a series of accidents will do well to learn those lessons that are provided from the experiences of these two countries.

Those, therefore, who strive to build a new order in Asia to secure prosperity and freedom for the masses of the people, must discard the politics of nationalism. Such politics cannot serve their purpose. They must turn to a new politics. Can they do so? Does not colonial nationalism *inevitably* degenerate into fascism, and thus is not the advice to turne to better politics bound to fail? To agree to this would be to minimize the force of human will. There are several reasons for hope. For one thing colonial nationalism in some countries in South East Asia has not assumed the organizational rigidity of Indian nationalism. Individuals who have come into contact with progressive ideas of the West still play a dominating part in the direction of these movements—in Indonesia and Viet Nam, for example. A sufficiently large number of such men guided by new ideals in politics can change the course of events and direct the politics of their country into democratic channels.

If nationalism has to go, what must take its place? It must be remembered that in speaking of nationalism, we do not mean merely the social and political structure which goes with the basic attitudes centered on the concept of the nation. We mean the outlook on life that nationalism represents—the idea that the individual good is subordinate to national interests, that, in consequence values such as patriotism, the spirit of sacrifice, self-abnegation, are superior to all other values centering about the dignity of the individual. In short, only a socialist philosophy can replace nationalism in its totality and supply new values on which a better life can be based and society reconstructed.

THE WORLD LABOR FORCE

Trade Unions and Communists

In keeping with the international coverage of *Modern Review,* we are introducing a regular department devoted to a summary and analysis of international labor developments. This will include discussion of such subjects as the political orientation of labor in general and trade unions in particular, the most recent plans for labor participation in management, organizational and other problems. Since the attempts of the various national Communist parties to dominate the trade union organization form one of the most immediate problems today, we are devoting our initial survey to a review of this situation, limiting ourselves to those countries where the problem of Communist infiltration is most dangerous. A special survey on the "Decline of the Latin American Communist Parties," by Robert J. Alexander, also appears in this issue, following this department.

FRANCE. From Liberation to May 1947, the Communist dominated French Federation of Labor (CGT) had cooperated with the Government to maintain labor peace. When the resignation of the Communist ministers were accepted, however, and when they realized that they were unable to overthrow the Cabinet, it was inevitable that the peace be broken. It was also inevitable that the large non-Communist minority in the CGT act in order to protect the rank and file from Communist political exploitation. The advent of the Marshall Plan obliged the Communists to act before it could be put into effect. Therefore, in late November and early December, 1947, at the time that the U. S. Congress had convened for the Special Session on Interim Aid to France, Italy and Austria, and while the Foreign Ministers were meeting in London, the Communists launched a series of widespread strikes.

Previous to instituting the strikes, the Communist majority on the Executive Board of the CGT had decided, on November 12 and 13, to demand a minimum wage of 10,800 francs monthly ($90.75 at the legal rate of exchange) and to consult both organized and unorganized workers on how best to obtain this minimum. It was at this meeting that the *Force Ouvrière* (Workers' Strength) first made itself heard. It protested the irresponsibility of asking for a wage increase which would accelerate the inflationary spiral and warned the majority against calling mass strikes. Although the FO was fully aware of the necessity for increased mass purchasing power and was dissatisfied with the Government's answer to the demands of the CGT, it was willing to consider this answer as a basis for discussion. The FO believed that a general strike would be detrimental

to French interests in general and therefore to those of the workers. It also demanded a secret strike vote in each enterprise where the workers were already striking, since such elections, when conducted honestly, usually resulted in repudiation of the political strike. This is borne out by the following strike call votes: at the naval steel works at Saint Chamond 2,133 voted against, 774 in favor; the Michelin factory at Clermont-Ferrand 5,634 against, 3,360 for; in the electrical power plants in the Paris region, in spite of Communist Minister Marcel Paul's previous blandishments, 5,356 against, 2,053 in favor. In spite of the FO's continued negotiations with the Government, the National Strike Committee, on December 9, called for increased strikes. This call, however, was not answered and the workers went to work under conditions which the Communists had previously found unacceptable. Disillusionment obviously followed and many workers left the CGT.

It was then, on December 18 and 19, that the first conference of the *Force Ouvrière* was called, and the split became a reality. Support for secession came principally from the unions representing the Provinces while Léon Jouhaux and the other leaders from the Paris region favored continuation within the CGT until the final ballot. The results were reported as 52 votes for secession, 5 against and 14 abstaining. Besides Jouhaux, these are the leaders of the FO: Bothereau, Bouzanquet, Delamarre and Neumeyer.

The FO then appealed to its followers to resign from the CGT and form their own locals, regional unions and federations in preparation for a constituent convention to be held as soon as feasible. In this way, the FO leaders sought to assure their representation on the administrative boards of the nationalized industries, the Natoinal Economic Council, the ILO and the WFTU where Communists dominated. An attempt by the CGT to depose Jouhau as President of the National Economic Council, which is one of the new bodies created by the Constitution of the Fourh Republic, was unsuccessful.

In its first month of existence, the FO attracted over a million workers from all industries. There are strong FO groups among the railroad, metal and postal workers, and the white-collar workers and government employees are completely under FO control. The union of Parisian journalists also broke with the CGT. The only major disappointment the FO has suffered in its two months of life has been in the recent mine election. However, the Communists entrenched themselves in the mines during the occupation and have made special efforts to maintain their hold. It is significant, in this connection, to note that the Communists lost in elections held in the Pas-de-Calais Department, the home of Guy Mollet, General-Secretary of the Socialist Party.

In order to facilitate its task of control and sabotage of production, the CGT has changed its policy as to the desirability of national contracts for each industry. The Communists announced on January 15, that they would henceforth urge local contracts, thus repudiating one of the cardinal

tenets of trade unionism. This is the first time since the split that the CGT and the FO have taken diametrically opposed stands.

The FO, in keeping with the French trade union tradition of political independence, denies any connection with the Third Force. There is also no liaison between FO and the Christian Trade Unions who are also in the forefront of the fight against Communist domination.

ITALY. The status of democratic trade unionism in Italy is less encouraging than in France. More than twenty years of fascism have left their mark and Italian trade unionism has a less well developed popular base than that of other Western European countries. This has, of course, weakened the position of the democratic Socialist trade unionss. The Communists, with the help of the Nenni Socialists, were able to take over the Italian General Confederation of Labor (CGIL) immediately after the liberation of Rome in June, 1944. Since the Nenni Socialists were in control of the party, the Communists had a majority in the "unity of action pact" signed by the Communists, Socialists and Christian Democratic parties. This was the signal to abolish independent unions. In Naples, two groups, one composed principally of Catholic trade unionists and the other of the Action Party, some Trotskyists and a Communist minority, were incorporated into the parent body.

In the honeymoon following Liberation, the CGIL bureaucracy signed an agreement pledging the CGIL to be free and non-political. This agreement was suggested by Luigi Antonini, Vice-President of the ILGWU, who was sent to Italy as a member of an Anglo-American labor delegation to help the Italians reorganize their unions democratically. Several months later, however, the Christian Democrats decided to organize their own faction within the CGIL. It is called the Christian Workers' Association and should they decide to leave the CGIL, it could be used as a nucleus of the pre-Fascist Italian Confederation of White Trade Unions.

At present, CGIL policy is completely determined by the Communist Party program to disrupt production, increase dissatisfaction and thus sabotage Italian participation in the Marshall Plan. Since both the craft and industrial unions are still paper organizations, the CGIL works through local central bodies called "Chambers of Labor." Collective agreements are signed between the parent organization and these Chambers. This results in complete absence of any true representation by the workers. Although the demonstrations and strikes are so organized as to give the impression of great strength, and although the CGIL claims six million members, the actual dues-paying membership is much smaller.

The fiction of tri-partite unity within the CGIL was maintained until June, 1947, when the first regular convention of the CGIL was held. Although the convention assured Communist control of the CGIL bureaucracy, it viewed the beginning of organized opposition. In addition to the Christian Workers Association, opposition was crystallized around the Socialist Party of the Italian Workers, which had split from the Socialist Party in January, six months earlier. This group is trying to free the

CGIL from all political parties. Its task is all the more difficult since it must face and fight the full barrage of Communist smear tactics and the disillusionment of the workers themselves.

The solution to this impasse would be union among all the minority groups. This has already been accomplished among the non-denominational groups—democratic Socialists, Republicans and independents. However, the largest minority group, the Christian Democrats, presents a problem because of its confessional character and also because of some Italian Catholic views on the role of trade unionism. The seriousness of the situation should, however, serve to make all of the minorities understood the necessity of unting on the traditional basis of non-denominationalism.

GERMANY. A microcosm of Soviet policy in Europe may be seen in the attempt to impose the working and living conditions of the Soviet zone on the workers of Berlin, so as to wipe out the difference which makes "the maintenance of public safety and order in Berlin more difficult." Thus spoke General Kotikov when he submitted his fourteen points to the Allied Control Commission on October 31, 1947. These fourteen points repeat the "measures for the increase of th productivity of labor and for the improvement of the material situation of manual and white-collar workers" in the Soviet zone. These measures include public citation and plaudits to those workers who exceed the prescribed working norms, the establishment of such norms, and the introduction of penalties for non-compliance with the rules, such as "withdrawal of additioal ration-free food" or public reprimand.

There were immediate protests to this program from all but the Communists on the Berlin Regional Committee of the Free German Trade Union Federation (FDGB). *Der Sozialdemokrat,* published in the Russian sector in Berlin, called these Russian methods "slave-driving" and reported that 35 percent of the employers of the *Saechsische Aufbauwerk* in Chemnitz had been fired for protecting the Stakhanovite methods introduced into that factory. The independent trade unionists and works councillors in Berlin called a meeting and formed the Trade Union Opposition organization. They unanimously adopted a resolution declaring: "We call upon all trade unionists in Berlin to thwart this attempt at further Communist infiltration. We do not, however, believe that the refusal of opposition members to continue payment of dues to the FDGB, as has been proposed, is the right course of action. The opportunity for action will arise in the spring of 1948 when the Executive Board of the FDGB comes up for re-election. Preparations for this election campaign and for new electoral procedure must be made now so as to prevent repetition of political party machinations in the election of delegates to the city convention which elects the Executive Board. The declaration concluded with a demand that the election of the Executive Committee be by direct and secret ballot of the entire membesrhip.

Upon the formation of the Trade Union Opposition, the Russian-controlled press, the SED and the FDGB leadership started a campaign

to discredit the organization and otherwise prevent its functioning. Among other weapons, a wave of rumors swept Berlin to the effect that the Western powers would soon leave. The official Soviet paper *Taegliche Rundschau* openly threatened the end of four power rule in Berlin if the British and Americans established bi-zonal government.

The FDGB in Thuringia proposed, last November, the establishment of forced labor camps for "saboteurs, speculators, black-market operators and persons who profit from fictitious labor contracts." This proposal was opposed by the Chrstian Democratic and Liberal Democratic parties in the Diet. A motion was finally adopted asking the Government of Thuringia to take the FDGB proposal into consideration in preparing its forthcoming bill on the struggle against speculators.

Communist general policy in Germany is to support plans for an all-German Labor Conference before the trade union organization in the various zones has been completed. This is opposed by the trade unionists in the American zone. Such an all-German conference would give the Communists the opportunity to secure control of the central organization in the face of the divided trade unionist organization in the other zones.

Communist influence is checked only, to quote one of the present Communist-appropriated patron saints, "by eternal vigilance." In Belgium, the Communists were effectively ousted from control of the Belgian Federation of Labor two years ago. But a situation recently arose which they intended to exploit. The leading Communist trade unionist and a Secretary of the Federation, Theo Dejace, was ordered by his party not to submit his name for re-election at the Convention to be held at the end of February. The Executive Board unanimously declared in reply, in phraseology similar to that of the Berlin Trade Union Opposition, that the choice of officers of the Belgian Federation of Labor is a purely internal trade union affair and that only the regularly elected delegates have the right to make nominations at the Convention. The Executive further warned the workers to oppose any political interference whatsoever. The Convention voted to reduce the number of Secretary-ships and also defeated the Communist candidate by a vote of 5 to 1. This is the first time since Liberation that there is no Communist Secretary of the Belgian Federation of Labor.

Leila Seigel

DECLINE OF LATIN AMERICAN COMMUNIST PARTIES: A SURVEY

Robert J. Alexander

During the last year and a half the Communist parties of Latin America have not fared well. In 1945 and 1946 they were stronger than ever before, but their position has since deteriorated considerably. During the Second World War the Communists made significant gains. There was much sympathy in Latin America for the struggle of the Russians, and there as elsewhere this sympathy was exploited by the local Stalinists. The United States Government is reported at that time to have brought pressure on a number of the American republics to recognize Russia, and to permit more freedom of action for all opposition groups, including the Communists. In addition, the continental tours and other activities of Vincente Lombardo Toledano, president of the Latin American Confederation of Workers, undoubtedly were of considerable help to the Communists.

In the few months which followed the end of the War, the Communists were, therefore, generally well situated in the Latin countries. Virtually for the first time in its history, the Brazilian Communist party was legalized, and in elections in December, 1945, it succeeded in gaining more than a dozen members of parliament, while showing very great strength in most of the bigger industrial towns and cities. Meanwhile, it had made great progress in the unions, and had brought a fair proportion of the labor movement under its guidance. By the middle of 1946 the Brazilian Communist party had some 150,000 members.

In Argentina, too, the Communist party had been legalized by the government. The Communists were allied with the Radicals and Socialists in the Democratic Union for the elections in February, 1946, but after the election of President Peron, they tentatively shifted their allegiance to the camp of the winner. They had lost a good deal—as had most other groups in the labor movement—with most of their rank and file supporters going over to Juan Domingo Peron. The Chilean Communist party had gained one victory after the other. It had been to a large degree responsible for the near-destruction of the Socialist party, and had infiltrated sufficiently into the dominant Radical party to have a decisive voice in the administration of that group. In the labor movement the Communists had achieved control of a sizable majority of the organized workers by the end of 1946. In November, 1946, the Communists entered the government of Chile for the first time, winning three cabinet posts and many other positions of sub-cabinet rank.

V-E Day saw the Communists still dominant in the Peruvian Confederation of Labor, and the election of June, 1945, put more Communist deputies in parliament than had ever sat there before. In the same year the Communist party was fully legalized for the first time in many years. The Communists by 1945 had half a dozen members of the Colombian parliament, and had representatives in most of the provincial legislatures. They were the undoubted masters of the trade union movement. They had infiltrated into high places in the dominant Liberal party and had influence far out of proportion to their numbers. At the end of World War Two the Venezuelan Communists were basking in the sun of a friendly, if exceedingly corrupt government. They were virtually legalized, and though they lost their majority status in the labor movement a few years before, they were still of considerable political importance.

During the Second World War, the Cuban Communists had a Minister in the government of President Batista, the first Communist to sit in an American Cabinet. They were the almost unchallenged bosses of the Confederation of Cuban Workers, and were so strongly placed there that they were able, by threat of a general strike, to force President Grau San Martin, who came to office in the middle of 1944, to not only permit them to maintain most of the positions they gained under the Batista regime, but to give them additional lucrative jobs in the public service.

The Communists had also gained firm control of the majority of the trade unions of Uruguay during World War Two. They were making considerable headway among the working-class as discontent mounted over the constantly increasing cost of living. In Mexico, the Communists seemed to have preserved their position in the labor movement and in political life in general, by being the first to jump on the bandwagon of Miguel Aleman, the government-backed candidate to succeed President Avila Camacho.

There were several reasons for the decline of the Communists during the next two years. First there was an outbreak of mass unrest in the Latin American countries as a result of the influence of the war-time propaganda and the victory of the Allies. In all but two important countries, this trend took the form of something other than the Communist movement. In Argentina, it found its expression in the Peronista movement; in Peru, it was the Apristas who were the gainers; in Venezuela, the Revolution of October, 1945, aroused great hope in most of the country's workers, and they flocked into the victorious Accion Democratica party. In Cuba, the Autentico party of Grau San Martin succeeded in winning new support after its leader became president of the republic. In Colombia, the meteoric rise of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan expressed the disgust of many Colombians with the "Liberal oligarchy" against which Gaitan directed his principal attack. All of these groups gained the loyalty of workers who had hitherto backed the Communists.

Another factor in the decline of the Communists after World War Two was a full-fledged revolt against Communist domination of the labor movement, a phenomenon which had been developing for a number of

years. Finally, the influence of international conditions cannot be overlooked in assessing the position of the Communist parties of Latin America in the last two and a half years. In country after country, the Communists have been forced on the defensive. The rise of the Peronista Movement in Argentina cut out the ground from under the Communists. Before the revolution of 1943, the Communists seemed likely to gain control of the labor movement in the not-too-distant future. They had succeeded in engineering a split in the Confederacion General de Trabajo, with the aid of some ambitious but not over-scrupulous non-Communist leaders. Control of the so-called C.G.T. No. 2 would have been nearly completely in their hands, and that group might have become the dominant force in the labor movement of the country.

However, with the rise of Peron, the Communists, like the Socialists, syndicalists, anarchists, and all other groups that had drawn support from the working-class, lost very heavily. Peron was able to convince a sizeable majority of the Argentine workers that he was the great champion of their rights. He was able to build up a political movement which capitalized on the incoherent but nonetheless real undercurrent of discontent which was affecting the Argentine working-class. In the early 1940's, the Communists had been profiting from this upsurge of unrest and seemed capable of displacing the dominant Socialist group in the leadership of the workers. But by the middle of 1946 the Communists—like the Socialists—had seen the vast majority of the workers in the unions which they controlled go over to the Peronista movement. So the Communists liquidated their trade unions and entered the ones controlled by Peron, at the same time changing their political position to one of being "for Peron, but. . . ." Whether this shift will in the long run recoup the Communists' losses remains to be seen.

The Chilean CP probably came as near to achieving complete control of that country as has any Communist group in the Americas. Since 1938, the Communists had experienced a steady growth. The disintegration of the Socialist party, which had held first place in the labor movement helped the Communists considerably. By the end of the war the Stalinists were undoubtedly the most important political element in the labor movement; they had succeeded in isolating the Socialists in the unions and had brought the Radicals, Falangistas, Democrats and other groups in line with Communist leadership. With the death of President Rios, and the resultant election in September, 1946, the Communists' supreme opportunity arrived. They backed, for the Leftist nomination for president, a Senator from the North, Gabriel Gonzalez Videla, who had been a close ally of the Communists for many years. In the election campaign the Communists succeeded in arousing the fire of Leftist enthusiasm which had waned during the administration of Rios, and Gonzalez Videla became president. He immediately invited the Communists to participate in his government for the first time in the history of Chile. They entered the Cabinet with three ministers. At the same time several of the other members of the Cabinet, ostensibly Radical party members, were closely allied with the CP.

From their posts in the government, the Communists sought to

do the following: they wanted to infiltrate the government administration, and they set out to make absolute their control of the labor movement. The ministries and other government organs which the Communists controlled were widely purged, and loyal party-members were put in the places of those ousted. In the trade union field, they had the fullest backing from the government, which appropriated money for the convention expenses of their faction of the Confederation of Chilean Workers, which put pro-Communists in key places in the Ministry of Labor. The President, meanwhile, toured the country making such statements as "Anyone who is anti-Communist, is a fascist," and "Nothing in heaven or on earth can separate me from the Communists."

Acting as if they already had a "dictatorship of the proletariat," the Communists alienated practcially every other political group, even many of the Radicals who were their closest allies. When the municipal elections of April, 1946, indicated that the Radicals had lost heavily to the Communists, while the Liberals—a Right-wing party also in the government—had lost heavily to the Conservatives, a political crisis developed. The Liberals left the movement, leaving President Gonzalez with the support of only a minority in Congress. He was then faced with the choice of continuing with a Radical-Communist coalition government, and facing the opposition of Congress, with the distinct possibility that he might sooner or later have to call on the armed forces to "preserve order;" or he could surrender to pressure from the Liberals, and from elements in his own Radical party, and throw the Communists out of his government. He chose the latter.

For a few months, relations between the Communists and Gonzalez continued to be amicable. The CP kept all the posts it had gained, except those in the Cabinet, and they directed their fire at those bringing pressure on the President rather than against the President himself. At the same time, however, they led a mounting wave of strikes, particularly in the key mining and transportation industries, with the apparent aim of demonstrating to Gonzalez that he could govern more easily with than without them.

These and other tactics finally turned Gonzalez Videla against the Communists. He raised the issue of a coal strike to turn on them with great violence. First, he granted all of the economic demands which the miners had made, including a 45 percent wage increase. Then, when the Communists refused these for political reasons, he moved troops in, brought workers from all over the country to operate the mines, and rounded up the chief Communist leaders in the coal mining areas, who had for a decade operated a sort of small Soviet dictatorship in the area. When the Communists tried to run a general strike in protest against the government actions, it failed completely and the leaders of the Communists in the copper and nitrate mining unions were ousted. At the same time, the Communists began to be ousted from their posts in the public administration, and a new center-of-the-road government was organized.

The result of all this is that the Chilean Communists, after a short

period in office, are now probably farther from power than they have been in many years. Their failure can be attributed chiefly to the fact that they acted like dictators before they actually had a dictatorship, and thus united everyone against them at a time when the opposition was still more powerful than they were.

In Cuba, too, the Communists have fallen from grace. When Dr. Grau San Martin was elected president in 1944, the Communists expected that government to oust them from their control of the trade union movement, since the Communists' chief rivals in the unions were the members of Dr. Grau's own party, the Autenticos. However, in the summer of 1944, when the issue was posed by Grau on the need for the "reform" of the labor movement, the Communists presented the President with the ultimatum that if he attempted to interfere with their trade union positions, they would call a general strike. A general walkout at that time would probably have meant the overthrow of Dr. Grau's movement, since the regime had only a minority in parliament and an army that was generally loyal to Dr. Grau's predecessor and arch-enemy, Fulgencio Batista.

So. Dr. Grau surrendered and agreed that the status quo in the labor movement would be maintained. However, during the three years that followed, the labor-wing of the Autentico party carried on an extremely vigorous campaign among the rank and file members of the union, and won one position after another away from the Communists. At the same time, the Autenticos built an alliance in the unions with an independent group. Meanwhile, the general political situation had altered, and Dr Grau had been able to win a parliamentary majority and purge the Army, so that he was in a position to thwart any Communist attempt at a general walkout.

In the spring of 1947 the Confederation of Cuban Workers was scheduled to hold its Fifth Congress, and negotiations were carried on between the Communists and Autenticos. The Communists demanded that they be left in control of the machinery of the Confederation. The Autenticos refused, and Dr. Grau was no longer willing to force his partisans to agree to the Communists' terms. The result was two congresses, and the division of the labor movement. After some hesitation, the government extended its official recognition to the Autentico wing of the Confederation, and by the end of 1947 the Communists had definitely lost their primary position in the labor movement of Cuba.

In Colombia, the Communists virtually disintegrated in the political field, although they maintained themselves in the unions. The rise of Jorge Eliecer Gaitan as leader of the Liberal party completely undercut the Communists. They had started to capitalize on a rising unrest, but Gaitan took backing away from them. To such proportions did this rift develop that the Communist Youth organization went over *en masse* to the Gaitanista movement. As a result of the rise of Gaitan, the Communists lost all of their seats in parliament, all but one of their seats in provincial legislatures and in municipal governments. The party was split wide open, and three different Communist groups evolved.

In most of the other countries of Latin America, the Communists have lost ground since 1945. In Panama, a number of CP leaders were expelled from the party, went over to the Socialists, and took control of the labor movement along with them, with the result that the Panamanian Federation of Labor joined the new Inter-American Federation of Labor, established under anti-Communist leadership in Lima in January, 1948. In Ecuador, the Congress of the Confederation of Ecuadorian Workers held at the end of 1946 resulted in control of that organization passing from the Communists to the Socialists. In Mexico, the Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico, which had been for a decade the dominant labor organization of that country, and in which the Communists had wielded much influence, split several times and was reduced to one of about a dozen central labor organizations functioning in Mexico. The position of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, chief spokesman for, if not leader of the pro-Communist group in the Mexican labor movement, was made practically impossible when he was repudiated even by his own followers and finally expelled from the C.T.M. in January, 1948.

The end of the dictatorship in Peru, and the rise of the Apristas to a position of legality and influence, resulted in the complete disintegration of the Communist position in the labor unions of that country. The Communists had worked very closely with the dictatorships of Benavides and Prado. Therefore, with the great revulsion against those dictatorships which followed establishment of democracy in Peru, the Communists lost whatever shreds of prestige still remained. The control of 90 percent of the labor movement passed into the hands of the Apristas.

The rise of the Accion Democratica government in Venevuela, as a result of the Revolution of 1945, brought to that country results somewhat similar, with regard to the Communists, as those in Peru. The wave of enthusiasm which the Revolution engendered solidified the position of the Accion Democratica party in the unions, and seriously weakened the Communists. A Confederation of Venezuelan Workers was established in November, 1947, under Accion Democratica leadership. The Venezuelan Communists were meanwhile divided into two antagonistic parties, neither of which was in a possition to be a serious challegne to the A. D. either in the unions or the country at large.

Finally, in Brazil, the Communists have not only lost seriously in the ranks of labor, but the government has taken the offensive against them and has outlawed the party and the central organization which was established under the party's aegis. It seems likely that the outlawing of the CP, unless it is accompanied by the institution of a totalitarian dictatorship on the model of that of Vargas, is not likely to be too effective. It makes things somewhat more inconvenient for the Communists, and may frighten away some of the more timid elements, but it seems likely to strengthen the CP in the long run, by making martyrs of them and perhaps strengthening the core of their organizations. For the time being, however, the Communists of Brazil have lost heavily.

The tide has been running against the Communists in Latin America

since the end of the war. It seems likely, in view of the mouting tension of the international situation, and the continued popularity of movements such as the Apristas, Accion Democratica, the Autenticos and even the Peronistas that the Communists will not recoup many of these losses in the near future. In the long run, if these other mass movements cannot fulfill the hopes and the aspirations which they have aroused among the people of their countries, the Communists may be expected to flourish on the resultant disillusionment. And here the United States can play an important role. Giving economic and other help to the democratic regimes, such as those of Peru, Venezuela and Cuba will be more useful in the long run to the US than a thousand laws outlawing the Communist parties.

BIRTH OF THE INTER-AMERICAN CONFEDERATION

Serafino Romualdi

A new chapter in the history of international labor was written in Lima, Peru, when trade union representatives of sixteen countries of the Western Hemisphere voted unanimously to organize the Inter-American Confederation of Workers. This meeting, known as the Lima Inter-American Trade Union Conference, was held from the 10th to the 13th of January.

In spite of the many attempts on the part of the Communists to sabotage the conference, and the last minute frantic intervention of the Government-controlled Argentine Confederation of Labor which sent special missions throughout Latin American in an attempt to becloud the purpose of the Conference and to prevent as many countries as possible from sending delegations, it can be emphatically stated that from the point of view of number of countries, organizations and membership represented, and also as regards constructive decisions adopted, thet Conference was a thorough success.

The American Federation of Labor delegation was composed of Philip Hannah, Secretary of the Ohio State Federation of Labor; James M. Duffy, president of the National Brotherhood of Operative Potters; Thomas J. Lloyd, substituting for Patrick Gorman, president of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, and this writer, staff member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and AFL Latin American representative. Other United States representatives were: Bert M. Jewell, for the Railway Labor Executives Association, and Roy Brown, Vice-President of the International Association of Machinists.

The conference was attended by 135 delegates, representing about 14 million organized workers, from 17 different countries.

Delegate Philip Hannah, selected by the United States delegation to speak at the inaugural ceremony, delivered a forceful speech which was enthusiastically received. In its conclusion he said: "We want a Democratic Inter-Americanism without Imperialism; we want better living and working conditions for the workers—*for all workers*—of the Western Hemisphere; we want the advancement of social justice and the protection of the rights of labor; we want democracy strengthened and extended; we want to see, in our time, the Four Freedoms of the Atlantic Charter become a

living reality; we want to see our America, the New World, become the unconquerable bulwark of human rights, and social progress.

Hannah also stated: "We are strongly opposed to the policies of those American corporations or any other foreign-owned or nationally-owned industrial corporation that exploit their workers, that take out of the country all or a great part of their profits. Any measure to correct such abuses will have our full support. In a memorandum presented last month by the American Federation of Labor to the Sub-Committee of the United Nations studying economic conditions in Latin America, we stated and recommended that measures be taken to curb the excessive flows of profits abroad, and that a large share of these profits be instead distributed to the workers in the form of higher wages or taken over by the respective governments through taxation—this taxation, of course, for the purpose of supporting social welfare or social security projects designed to improve the health and the standard of living of the wage-earners."

The Conference unanimously adopted the following declaration of principles:

The Inter-American Confederation of Workers considers as its main purpose the organization and unification of the manual and intellectual workers of the Americas, without distinction of political or religious opinions, nationality, sex, color or age, for the struggle against exploitation of men by men, until final emancipation.

In the conflict between capital and labor the Inter-American Confederation of Workers will guide its actions, inspired by principles and methods of the working class, and the democratic labor movement, independent of state tutelage and opposed to totalitarian practices.

The working class must be organized internationally. As a first step toward such organization, the Inter-American Confederation of Workers will strive to strengthen the activities of the trade unions of the democratic laboring masses of the American nations, and will maintain fraternal relations with all the trade union organizations of identical principles of the rest of the world.

That it will unequivocally take part in all struggles of the working class for better conditions, until it is freed from all oppression and exploitation. The right of labor union organization having been recognized by the International Labor Office and ratified by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations as being an inalienable right of the workers, its violation constitutes a threat to the labor union movement of all countries of the continent. Therefore, the joint action of the workers of the Americas for the defense of the right of unionization—whenever this right is violated under the guise of national sovereignty, wherever it may take place—does not represent intervention in the internal affairs of a country.

Much has been said in the press about the report of the Committee on Economic Program which failed to gain adoption and was referred to the Executive Committee for further study. Since the motion was presented by this writer, it can be emphatically stated that our rejection was not

motivated at all—as it was insinuated in some quarters—by "resentment on the part of the U. S. delegation of its sharp criticism of United States imperialism." In fact, the delegation was careful to state its complete agreement on this particular point. Our objections to this report of the Committee on Economic Program were based on the following three grounds:

(a) That is dealt with social and economic issues which were not on the agenda and on which the delegation was obviously not ready to express an opinion on behalf of the organization they represented;

(b) That it included endorsement of economic policies and social experiments which are in contrast with the economic and social philosophies upon which is based the program of the American Federation of Labor and other United States trade unions;

(c) That it contained premises, considerations and conclusions of a variety of subjects which in our opinion were not reconcilable with the purpose of the conference and with the aims of the new Inter-American organization.

Among the resolutions approved by the conference were the following:

(a) For the organization of a new International Federation of Trade Unions to supplant the existing World Federation of Trade Unions whose program is regarded by the Inter-American Confederation of Labor as incompatible with its policies and democratic program.

(b) Recommended the affiliation of all transport workers unions in the Western Hemisphere with the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF).

(c) Recommended the affiliation of all the mental workers unions in the Western Hemisphere with the International Federation of Metal Workers.

(d) Instructed the Executive Committee to invite the American Federation of Labor to join with the Inter-American Confederation of Labor in setting up a committee to investigate, at some future date, the working conditions existing in the Canal Zone with a view of presenting a solution that would end, once and for all, existing discriminations.

Before leaving Lima for the return trip to the United States, the delegation met and drafted a report to the respective organizations in which formal affiliation with the Inter-American Confederation of Workers was unanimously recommended. The report concluded:

"The delegation was greatly impressed by the sincerity and the spirit of cooperation shown by the delegates from every part of Latin America. Their firm belief in the need for such an inter-American trade union organization as the one we have organized in Lima was clearly shown in every statement they made, whether in plenary sessions or in personal conversation.

"We believe that the Inter-American Confederation of Workers has a great task to perform and can become the agency best equipped for bringing together in firm alliance all the pepole of the Western Hemisphere and initiating those measures, especially in the field of labor-management rela-

tions, that will result in a definite improvement in the standard of living of Latin America.

"We have also reached the conclusion, as a result of the exchange of views and information with our fellow delegates from our sister American republics, that the cooperation and active assistance of the American Federation of Labor and other trade unions of North America is essential in assisting our fellow trade unionists south of the Rio Grande to build strong unions in order to face, with the necessary skill, information and technical and legal assistance, the management of local and foreign-owned industrial corporations and thus bring them to agree on the necessity of establishing higher wages, better working conditions and other economic improvements that are much overdue.

"We finally believe that our sincere and active participation in this cooperative effort with organized labor in Latin America will greatly help in dispelling the heritage of suspicion, antagonism and even hate which have been the result of decades of ruthless economic imperialism and the still remembered policy of the big stick. The gratifying effects of 15 years of the Good Neighbor policy are perhaps more noticeable among workers than other classes of society. However, much needs still be done in order to achieve a mental and psychological attitude that will permit a policy of full and effective cooperation without mistrust and reservations. For this, too, we believe the Inter-American Confederation of Workers has an opportunity to perform a service of first magnitude."

THE CURRENT BRITISH TEMPER

The advent of the British Labor Party to power has given impetus to a spate of writings in the world press on Britain as the new "social laboratory." In an attempt to present some keys to the current British temper, as reflected in British magazines, we devote "The International Press" department this month entirely to that subject.

In an interesting article in *Tribune* of January 23 on "Our Socialist Objectives," Maurice Webb, M.P., Chairman of the Parliamentary Labor Party, attempts to place in political context the policies and program of the present English State.

Quoting at the outset the gist of the popular Tory political refrain: "Socialism is the root of all evil. Socialism is the cause of all your troubles," Mr. Webb comments:

That is the theme-song of Labor's opponents, plugged and put over with tireless ingenuity. Day by day they tell the public that all its hardships have been brought about by the arrival of the "Socialist State." And who is to blame them? It is obviously a good line for Tories to take. If, by persistent repetiton, they can make Socialism a synonym for deprivation and "doing without," they can soon destroy our chances of surviving another electoral test.

The trouble is that we make it easy for them by so often accepting the notion that this *is* a Socialist State and that the principles of free enterprise have ceased to operate.

Now the Government has done many magnificent things. It has in every important respect done what it said it would do. And there are very few things of any significance which it has not done which, in the time and circumstances, it might have done. But it is just abusing words to say it has established Socialism. The plain truth is we are not yet within miles of Socialism. And it is time we understood that, and stopped deluding ourselves with the notion that the battle has been won.

If this were a Socialist State we should not be plagued with such things as inflation and "too much capital investment." These phenomena, which cast ominous shadows over every act of this hard-pressed Government, have no place in a society which has geared all its main economic operations to need and not to profit. They are with us now, driving the Government into courses of action which are at variance with its root ideas, and playing havoc with all our plans for a better life, solely because this country of ours is still for the greater part a capitalist, not a Socialist State. Let us stop this muddling talk about the arrival of Socialism. All we have done so far is to make Socialism *possible*.

I make the point in no spirit of complaint. I do not believe that the circumstances of the post-war world permitted us to do more than that.

I firmly believe that the Government has followed a thoroughly sound and practical strategy. But that strategy has taken us no farther on the road to Socialism than the capture of two or three of the outpost positions—though fairly imporant outposts. . . .

Despite our controls and our measures of nationalization, the bulk of this country's economic activity is geared to the profit motive and governed by the principles of free enterprise. If it were not so, every increase of wages would not be followed by an increase in prices. If it were not so, the wage-earning and producing classes would not be still limited to just over a third of the national income as their reward. If it were not so, those who live by rent, interest and profit would be getting much less than a third as their share of the national income. . . . But it is so. Britain is still essentially a capitalist State. And we must not humbug ourselves into thinking otherwise.

Are we sure what we mean by Socialism? Does Socialism mean just a number of well-managed public utility companies, showing a margin on the right side of their balance-sheets, and kept in order by a handful of secretive, high-powered executives? I want the public utility companies, and I want them well-managed. If a profit is possible, I want that, too, but I don't regard it as essential in a public service. And I don't mind your getting the best technicians to run them. But I will get fighting mad if you try to persuade me that, having got all that, you've given me Socialism.

If that is your idea, you are doing something far worse than confuse means with ends (although you are doing that). You are prostituting the fine liberating idea of Socialism. You are using it merely as a device to get economic tidiness through managerial power. And, much as I like tidiness, I've not spent 25 years of my life advocating it as the end of all human emancipation.

I am a Socialist because I believe that the larger part of the business of getting a living can be separated entirely from what is called the price mechanism. I believe in the social distribution of available wealth according to need. I want to see the social management of productive property so that all men may enjoy more private property. . . . I see no answer to the problems of inflation and recurring crises of abundance, except through the distribution of all basic necessities according to the people's need of them, and not according to the money they are given in wages. I want to see the workers aspiring to wider spheres of responsibility than are now available to them.

These are some of the things I mean by Socialism. And that is why I say we have only made it *possible* by our measures of nationalism. It is the final effect of public ownership in the homes and lives of the people which matters. Socialism must be made a living source of benefit and happiness to the nation.

Now I admit we can do little more in this Parliament; although, even in this Parliament, I would like to see a Socialist Chancellor resisting the inevitable flight of prices after wages by rooting out all the costly agencies who draw big pickings for small economic service

in getting goods from the producers to the consumers.

But there is much in the view that our hands are full with the task of consolidating the gains we have made. All right. What then of the next Parliament? We shall still not get within measurable distance of a working Socialist State if all we propose is a further collection of Bills to nationalize industry. We must get down to the job of thinking out exactly how we propose to distribute the wealth which Socialist production will make available. Above all, let us sort out our first principles. . . . I regard that as the most urgent job before the Labor Party. If we can clearly and realistically define the major purposes for which we exist,, it should not then be difficult to translate our findings into a program of action which will excite and enliven the whole nation.

TRADE UNIONS AND SOCIALIST SOCIETY

The important problem of the role of trade unions in a Socialist society, an area calling for serious new formulations and expanded reformations, has been the focus for considerable discussion in recent months in England. Here are strands of current thought on this issue as reflected in two British publications.

Allen Skinner writes in the January, 1948, issue of *Left*:

Much of the unofficial intransigence in the trade unions might have been avoided if there had been any genuine attempt on the part of the TUC and the Government to work out together a clear policy on the position of trade unions in a Socialist Society, and its corollary of what would be required of the trade unions in the transition period. While the trade unions separately and collectively give their endorsement to the need for a planned economy they have pursued an obstinate and stupid policy of demanding that the trade unions shall have no commitments in relation to any plan. It is clear, for instance, that there simply cannot be a planned economy without some kind of coordinated wage policy; yet outstanding trade union leaders are found to be repeatedly making the claim that, planned economy or no planned economy, the trade unions must be left to pursue a free-for-all struggle. The trade unions, therefore, are fostering an unsocial insistence on the pursuance of interests, irrespective of social consequences, which can only make more difficult the task of inculcating the developed social sense required for the working of a Socialist system. Add to these factors the consideration that the unprecedented destruction and dislocation caused by the war has to be put right before we can look for any possibility of material progress, and that the Labor Government has had consequently to turn its attention to desperate salvage work rather than to the practical working out of constructive Socialist change, and it must be perceived that, whether it receives a renewed term of office or meets with defeat, the crying need from a Socialist standpoint will be for a body of people devoting themselves to the spread of understanding of the fundamentals of the Socialist philosophy and of the human values on which it must be based.

What is wanted urgently is a party that will put its stress on ultimates; not concerning itself with strategies, "interim policies" and current administrative adjustments.

States the *New Statesman and Nation* in the February 7 issue:

Though the middle class knows by bitter experience how much it has lost, working people find it hard to appreciate the gains they have made. A larger share of a much smaller national cake is no more satisfying to the individual worker—unless he lives in what was once a distressed area—than the smaller share of a large cake which he enjoyed before the war. This is particularly true when, as now, goods are in short supply, and the worklng-class household is induced to waste its money on gambling, smoking and pools because the things it really wants are not in the shops.

But the dilemma is inescapable. If the Labor movement, as it will be tempted to do, excuses its own indiscipline by blaming the excessive profits and dividends of the employer, and continues to press for higher wages, it will play into the hands of its enemies, for whom another 1931 would bring obvious benefits. The Prime Minister has made the choice clear. If the Trade Unions fail to follow his lead, then either they will lose their cherished rights of collective bargaining under a Socialist wages policy far more drastic than direction of labor, or they and the Government will be broken by the financial crash. They are asked, in fact, to show that the British working-class movement has the political maturity to make a planned economy work compatibly with industrial freedom. Their response is likely to deend very largely on the resoluteness of the Government's determination to impose sanctions on the employing side, if necessary, and to impose them in time.

THE MANIFESTO CENTENARY

The one-hundredth anniversary of the publication of the 1848 Communist Manifesto of Marx and Engels is the subject of a re-appraisal by Bernhard Reichenbach in the February *Socialist Commentary*.

A middle way is suggested, writes Mr. Reichenbach, by those who hope to save the Marxian idea of the law of development while abandoning the one-sided economic determinism. As against the statement of the *Communist Manifesto* that the collapse of the bourgeoisie and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable, they point to another assertion which poses the alternative of Socialism or barbarism. Leaving aside the question of whether Marx has contradictious prophecies in his theory, such a statement of alternatives is not a scientific prediction. What the advocates of such modifications fail to understand is that in this way the theory is gradually reduced to a collection of banalities. The whole dialectical method becomes a mere jugglery, and cannot even claim any longer to be what Marx certainly intended it to be, a guide to political and social action.

The elements of Marxism which have stood the test of time are primarily tenets which Marxism has in common with other and in part older Socialist creeds. For in-

stance, there is the demand that the capitalist system should be replaced by one based on the common ownership of the means of production and giving rise to a planned Socialist economy; the understanding that the economic basis of society has a profound influence on the lives and ideas of the individual, and on prevailing moral standards; finally, the challenge to idealistic philosophy in so far as it encourages the illusion that ideas as such can change the world, and—although this was in part undermined by the theory—the call to action as an urgent *task*.

It was the merit of Karl Marx and the Marxist workers' movements that they put stress on certain essentials of the Socialist struggle which hitherto had been neglected. What are these essentials? They are not the theory about surplus value or pauperization of the masses; not the law of the development of society; not the view that ideas are the mere reflection of economic conditons. The positive ideas which remain are the demand for economic equality and the call for action by the exploited themselves—even across the frontiers of nations. The workers learned to unmask attempts to cover up by ideological tricks social privilege and power interests. They learned to understand the political implications of their economic struggles. Finally they became more fully conscious of their right to have a say in the shaping of economic and political conditions.

Developments have passed over the prophecies of Marx. His revolutionary theory has led the workers into many blind alleys and defeats. Yet, throughout a whole century the *Communist Manifesto* has been a beacon of revolt and of hope because it voiced the demands of justice, and because in its words rang the ethos of humanity. Few other documents have denounced an evil social order with such indignation, and called with such vigor on those who toil and suffer to resist. It promised them freedom and inevitble victory, but it asked them also to fight—in the words of the *International*: "Our own right hands the chains must sever." On this centenary of the *Communist Manifesto* we honor the many who followed this appeal, and who during the past hundred years lived, suffered and died for the cause of Socialism.

THE RUSSIAN CULTURE PURGE

The newest phases of the official degradation of the arts in Russia called forth from *The Economist* in the February 21 issue, the following satiric (and not so satiric) analysis:

The word has gone forth from Moscow. Shostakovitch and Prokofiev are convicted of "journalistic perversions" and "anti-democratic tendencies" and will now presumably follow the humorist Zostchenko and the economist Varga into obscure silence. There may be an alternative open to them. Positive instruction has accompanied condemnation, a demand that music shall sing a democratically comprehensible tune; and the censured composers may work their passage home to respectability by an adequate output of hummable melodies, such as *My Little Grey Home in the Urals, After*

the Purge Was Over, the *War March of the NKVD,* and the *Harmonious Stakhanovite*—finally demonstrating their political soundness with a Marxist version of *Gott Straf England.* One's heart goes out to them. Imagine Mr. Dylan Thomas, convicted of unintelligible cacophony, forced to redeem himself by a reversion to the style of Lord Tennyson or — since democratic appeal is to be the supreme test— Miss Wilhelmina Stitch. Conceive Mr. T. S. Eliot offering as his neckverse a new *Absent-Minded Beggar.* One would not put it past Picaso to get a lot of quiet fun out of his pentitential *Monarch of the Glen,* and Sartre might contrive to slip an existentialist message, under the censor's nose, into a modern *Silver King.* But "Oh, what labor! Oh Prince, whate pain!"

This lamentable business, however, may yield good in the long run. It indicates to the Western world a hitherto unnoticed channel of access to Russian public opinion. The crime of Shostakovitch and his fellow-sinners was that they were Westernizers, corrupted by the approval and applause of the Fascist beasts who read the *New Statesman* and frequent Carnegie Hall. The praise of the Western critic spells professional death to its object. Well and good. Let the Foreign Office brief the critics, and let them do their stuff. Let them ecstatically analyze the oratorical cadences of Mr Zhdanov, and prostrate themselves before the monolithic magnificence of Mr. Molotov's *Ewiges Nein.* Let them demand for Mr. Gromyko a pedestal in Trafalgar Square, and public celebrations on the birthday (if discoverable) of the news editor of *Moscow Radio.* The public, once aware of its role, will surely back them up, directing a barrage of fanmail on the selected targets, and offering large sums by advertisement for any available locks of Mr. Molotov's hair. Who can doubt the result? One can at least be certain that the Russians will not retaliate by sending a mission, on behalf of their art galleries, to negotiate the purchase of a steady supply of landscapes by Mr. Churchill.

ENGLAND AND THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY

Since American foreign policy, including current and future economic rehabilitation commitments, furnishes an important key to the developing political situation in Europe, as well as the status, in important part, of the British economy, it is hardly surprising that the 1948 presidential race in the U. S. should have created considerable and constant discussion in England. In "To the White House," a general treatment of the subject, *Manchester Guardian Weekly* in the issue of January 29 states:

General Eisenhower's declaration that he will not stand for the Presidency and the reasons he has given for his decision do him great credit. The Republicans (or some of them) would have been glad to use his immense reputation and popularity to bring themselves into power, though it is a question how far they would have followed his leadership if he had been elected. But he has seen clearly the dangers to democracy of using the prestige of the soldier as a political weapon; he has resisted the temptation to exploit his great name, and he has

raised it the higher by doing so. His decision opens the field again to a host of contenders. Many of those who have been pressing him to run are expected to transfer their support to Mr. Stassen, who has — of all the Republicans whose names have been seriously mentioned—the reputation of being the least conservative. But it is far too early to estimate the chances of Mr. Stassen, or Senator Taft, or Governor Dewey, or any of the rest. It is probable that the decision will remain unsettled until the last moment, and will be taken only after prolonged and complex bargaining within the Republican ranks. The position is in many respects not unlike that in 1920, when the name of Senator Harding emerged unexpectedly from a convention in which stronger personalities were evenly matched. But President Truman is more strongly placed than President Wilson was then. The Republican contenders for the nomination may be rejoicing that they have not to meet General Eisenhower's competition. So, no doubt, is the President. The General would have been harder to beat than any other man his opponents can put up against him.

About the campaign of Henry Wallace, the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* further comments:

Left against Right is not the only deep-seated political division in the United States. There is a not less important cleavage between isolationist and internationalist. In the Middle West isolationist sentiment is strong. It is expected to favor the Republicans. But Mr. Wallace's platform may also appeal to this body of opinion. He is strong against the "Truman doctrine" and the Marshall Plan "as applied"; he repudiates universal military training, which the President supoprts. In Mr. Krock's (of the N. Y. *Times*) view he may draw substantial support from the Republicans in the Middle West, especially if the Republicans nominate a strongly conservative candidate; for the conservatives of the party are for the most part isolationists too. The chances of a conservative nomination have been enhanced by General Eisenhower's refusal to stand. It is a paradox that Mr. Wallace should be thought to compete with the extreme Right in this way, and of course if he decides to stress domestic issues in his campaign he will not attract the votes of anyone who could conceivably vote for Mr. Taft. But if he continues to make opposition to the Marshall Plan and to military service his main theme he might have the effect Mr. Krock suggests.

Focusing on Senator Taft, *Tribune* of January 30 notes: "Ask the average English man-in-the-street his opinion of Robert A. Taft, and he would reply, quite unashamedly, that he didn't know the gentleman from Adam. Out of every million English people who have heard of Clark Gable, every quarter of a million who have heard of President Truman, every few thousand who have heard of Henry Wallace, only a bare handful have ever heard of Robert Taft. . . . The fact does small credit to our understanding of American politics. For Senator Taft is a very important personage." After an extended recpitulation of Taft's views, *Tribune* concludes: "The American Labor Movement has gone into battle against Taft and all his works. That is our battle,

too. For we can see a whole world of difference between Truman and Taft in 1948; perhaps all the difference between peace and war."

"BLOODLESS VICTORY" IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The Soviet seizure of Czechoslovakia is discussed by *The Economist* in the issue of February 28.

Once again, comments *The Economist,* long and careful preparation, rulthless single-mindedness and clever use of the whole party box of tricks have brought the Communists a bloodless victory. Against the prestige and national veneration enjoyed by President Benes, against the instincts and traditions of a people which during four centuries has defied tyrants and conquerors, against a majority of the electorate and against a strong and not completely unprincipled Social Democrat Party, the Czech Communists have taken all but the last steps towards the establishment of a "People's Republic in Czechslovakia. The new cabinet, in which every post that matters is in Communist hands, can now spend the next weeks or months in "rigging" the spring elections. The broadest bridge between east and west has been blown. A further proof has been given that Communists will not work loyally with other parties in any system that remotely resembles free, just and parliamentary government.

Those who wish to sugar the bitter pill which is now being swallowed by millions of Czechs and Slovaks ask us to believe that a choice had to be made in Czechoslovakia between what is called strict state planning and a compromise between democratic and socialist ideas. That is far less than half the story. Others may declare that the security of Russia demanded Communist predominance in Prague. That is no part of the story and entirely untrue. The loyalty of the former coalition government to Russia in all essential matters could be depended on absolutely. The incredible story of the plot prepared against it by non-Communist parties and "agents of the West" has been given an even more perfunctory and bogus form than usual. The issue is crystal clear: the Communist Party, which won 37 per cent of the votes at the elections in 1946, wished to impose its will on the elected representatives of the majority of the Czech and Slovak nations. It wished to do so now because it feared a reverse in the elections two months hence. It has now manoeuvered itself into a position where the result of those elections is a foregone conclusion. The latest from Prague is that a purge has begun. . . .

Most Czechs were, and are still, devoted to political democracy and proudly aware that they belong to the culture of the West; but they were equally determined to maintain their alliance with Russia. More passionately than any other nation, the Czechs desired friendship with both West and East. In this Presient Benes, with his pathetic hesitations and his wishful thinking, was a true symbol of his people.

The events of the last week have given final proof that this kind of reconciliation of West and East is not possible. If ever there was a people on whose loyalty the Russians could count it is the Czechs.

No one could be "friendlier" to the Soviet Union than President Benes or the Czechslovak party leaders. There was absolutely no need for Communist domination as a guarantee of Russian security. But the truth is that the men in the Kremlin do not want friends. The human race is for them divided into enemies and slaves. Not until power is monopolized by a Communist clique, all ideological influences from the West excluded, and personal friendship of individual citizens with westerners made a crime, can the Kremlin be satisfied with any country. The *Gleichschaltung* of South-Eastern Europe had already provided some fairly convincing examples. But there was still hope that this technique would not be applied to Czechoslovakia. Now the hopes are shattered. The process will take time to complete, just as the process initiated at Munich was not completed until March, 1939. But the decisive step has been taken.

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